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Directory

CONTENTS

Accommodations	596
Activities	599
Business Hours	599
Children	599
Climate Charts	600
Courses	600
Customs Regulations	601
Dangers & Annoyances	601
Discount Cards	602
Embassies & Consulates	602
Food	603
Gay & Lesbian Travelers	603
Holidays	603
Insurance	604
Internet Access	604
Legal Matters	604
Maps	604
Money	605
Photography	606
Post	606
Relocating to Argentina	607
Shopping	607
Solo Travelers	608
Telephone & Fax	608
Time	609
Toilets	609
Tourist Information	609
Travelers with Disabilities	610
Visas	611
Volunteering	611
Women Travelers	612
Work	612

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations in Argentina range from campgrounds to five-star luxury hotels, with excellent options in all categories. At the more tourist-oriented hotels, staff members usually speak a smattering of English, though at more provincial accommodations you'll need to learn the Spanish basics.

All but the cheapest hotels have private bathrooms, and most hotels include breakfast – usually *medialunas* (croissants) and weak coffee or tea – in the price. Generally, assume both are included as you flip through listings in this book. Many hotels provide temporary luggage storage for travelers who have late-afternoon or evening flights or bus trips.

Some hotels, particularly pricier hotels in tourist hot spots such as Patagonia, operate on a two-tier price system (see the boxed text, below), charging foreigners more than nationals.

For apartment rentals in the capital, see p109. For information on relocating to Argentina, see p607. Also note that many hotels offer discounted rates for extended stays, usually a week or more. Make sure to negotiate this *before* you begin your stay.

Prices

Throughout this book, accommodations are generally categorized by price: budget (up to AR$180 per double), midrange (from AR$180 to AR$250 per double) and top end (over AR$250 per double). Prices in Argentina have increased steadily over the last several years (many places charge twice what they did in 2003), and they may continue to do so. To avoid getting price shock, it's helpful to supplement your book research with a good

TWO-TIER PRICING

With the devaluation of the peso in 2002, Argentina became a highly affordable destination practically overnight. With the subsequent upswing in tourism, however, the annoying two-tier pricing system emerged: businesses in certain areas (mostly in Buenos Aires, but also in Patagonia and parts of the Lake District) charge Argentines one price and foreigners a higher price, regardless of whether they're banking euros, pounds or dollars. While you won't find this everywhere, you will encounter it at some *estancias,* national parks, the national airline (Aerolíneas Argentinas) and upmarket hotels throughout the country.

Many accommodations quote prices in US dollars rather than pesos. This doesn't necessarily mean you're getting charged more than Argentines; the peso is just so unstable that places prefer to use a currency that isn't always fluctuating.

PRACTICALITIES

- Argentina uses the metric system for weights and measures.
- Electrical current is 220 volts, 50 cycles, and there are two types of electric plugs: either with two rounded prongs or with three angled flat prongs. Adapters from one to the other are available.
- Buenos Aires' two leading daily newspapers, available throughout Argentina, are *Clarín* (www.clarin.com, in Spanish) and *La Nación* (www.lanacion.com.ar, in Spanish). English-language dailies include the *Buenos Aires Herald* (www.buenosairesherald.com; available at newsstands in most large cities) and the *Argentimes* (www.theargentimes.com; look for it at various tourist destinations). Also see Media, p93.
- In Buenos Aires, tune into FM 92.7 for 24-hour tango or FM 98.3 for Argentine rock.
- In Argentine addresses, the word *local* refers to a suite or office. If an address has 's/n' – short for *sin numero* (without number) – the address has no street number.

dose of internet research. For information on the rising cost of travel in Argentina, see the boxed text (p19).

That said, in Buenos Aires you can land excellent accommodations for under AR$200, and throughout the country AR$130 will buy you a comfortable double room. Hostels in Buenos Aires charge AR$25 to AR$35 per bed and from around AR$90 for a private double. Rates are lower outside the capital: figure on about AR$22 for a dorm bed and AR$60 for a private double.

Accommodations prices in this book, to the best of our knowledge, all include tax and are general high-season rates (although not peak seasons like Christmas or Easter). Budget and midrange hotels almost always include taxes when quoting their prices. If you're inquiring on your own into a top-end hotel, however, be sure to ask: pricier hotels often quote fares before tax – a whopping 21%! High season is generally July and August (except in Patagonia), Semana Santa (Easter week) and January and February (when Argentines take their summer breaks). Outside these times, prices can drop anywhere from 20% to 40% from the rates quoted in this book.

Camping & Refugios

Camping can be one of the most splendid ways to experience Argentina, particularly the Lake District and Patagonia, where there are many good campgrounds. Nearly every Argentine city or town has fairly central municipal campgrounds, where you can pitch a tent for around AR$20 per night. These are hit-and-miss – sometimes delightfully woodsy, sometimes crowded and ugly. Free campgrounds are often excellent, especially in the Lake District, although they lack facilities.

Private campgrounds usually have good facilities: hot showers, toilets, laundry, a barbecue for grilling, a restaurant or *confitería* (cafe), a small grocery store and sometimes even a swimming pool. Personal possessions are generally secure, since attendants keep a watchful eye on the grounds, but don't leave anything lying around unnecessarily.

For comfort, invest in a good tent before coming to South America, where camping equipment is costlier and often inferior, even in Argentina. A three-season sleeping bag should be adequate for almost any weather. A good petrol- or kerosene-burning stove is also a good idea, since white gas (called *bencina* in Spanish) is expensive and available only at chemical-supply shops, hardware stores and some camping stores in larger cities. Bring mosquito repellent, since many campgrounds are near rivers or lakes; the stuff is essential if you're camping in hotter places in north-central and northeast Argentina.

Backpacking and backcountry camping opportunities abound in and around the national parks, especially those in the Lakes District and the south. Some parks have *refugios* (basic shelters for hikers in the high country), which have some sort of cooking facilities and are filled with saggy but welcome bunks. Many *refugios* are free, but some do charge. They tend to fill up quickly in high season, so do your local research and arrive early to score a bed if necessary.

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodations reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels. You'll find the true, insider lowdown on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

Estancias

Few experiences feel more typically Argentine than staying at an *estancia* (a traditional ranch, often called *fincas* in the northwest). *Estancias* are a wonderful way to spend time in remote areas of the country – and wine, horses and *asados* (traditional barbecues) are almost always involved. *Estancias* are especially common in the area around Buenos Aires, near Esteros del Iberá and throughout the Lake District and Patagonia. In the latter, they're often geared toward anglers. Costs rarely dip below AR$250 per day, but the rates generally include room, board and some activities. To easily locate many of the *estancias* covered in this book, see the boxed texts, p152, p309 and p471; in Uruguay, see p564). *Estancias* are also listed in Sleeping sections. If you're investigating *estancias* from within Argentina, the provincial tourist offices (p609) in Buenos Aires are an excellent resource. Helpful websites listing *estancias* around Argentina include www.estanciastravel.com and www.estanciasargentinas.com.

Those lacking the time, money or inclination to spend the night on an *estancia* can still experience one by partaking in a *día de campo* (day in the country). Offered by many of the *estancias* that offer accommodations, the *día de campo* usually consists of a giant *asado,* horseback riding and other traditional activities associated with *estancias*.

Hospedajes, Pensiones & Residenciales

Aside from hostels, these are Argentina's cheapest accommodations, and the differences among them are sometimes ambiguous – to the point that they're often simply called hotels. However, if you're flipping through a tourist office's list of accommodations, they won't fall into the 'hotel' category.

A *hospedaje* is usually a large family home with a few extra bedrooms (and, generally, a shared bathroom). Similarly, a *pensión* offers short-term accommodations in a family home, but may also have permanent lodgers. Meals may be available. *Residenciales* figure more commonly in tourist-office lists. In general, they occupy buildings designed for short-stay accommodations, although some (known euphemistically as *albergues transitorios*) cater to clientele who intend only *very* short stays – of two hours maximum. Prostitutes occasionally use them, but they're mostly used by young Argentine couples with no other indoor alternative or by someone who cannot, for whatever reason, get busy at home.

Rooms and furnishings at these accommodations are modest, often basic and usually clean, and rooms with shared bathrooms are the cheapest. *Hospedajes* and *residenciales* are usually as good as or better than one-star hotels.

Hostels

Hostels have sprouted up throughout Argentina like grass on the pampas, and nearly every town with tourist appeal has at least one. Most are excellent places to stay, where you can meet and hang out with fellow travelers, get travel advice and enjoy one of the fun *asados* that are practically de rigueur. Like hostels throughout much of the world, those in Argentina usually have common kitchens and living spaces, shared bathrooms and (more often than not) at least one private double. What's more, most hostels are run by enthusiastic, conscientious people who have a finger on the pulse of Argentine travel, meaning few establishments in all of Argentina are as helpful in finding out the best places to visit. But remember that Argentines are night owls and hostelers tend to follow suit, so earplugs can be handy indeed.

Many hostels offer private doubles that, if not for their predominantly dorm-room style accommodations, would fall into our midrange sections. Those who crave the camaraderie of a hostel but actually wish to sleep (and have their own bathroom) should consider these options. They can offer the best of both worlds: the community of a hostel and the privacy of a hotel.

Card-carrying **Hostelling International** (HI; www.hihostels.com) members can save from 10% to 20% at HI facilities. Other hostel networks include **minihostels** (www.minihostels.com) and **HoLa** (www.holahostels.com).

Hotels

Argentine hotels vary from depressing, utilitarian one-star places to luxurious five-star hotels. Oddly enough, many one- and two-star hotels can prove better value than three- and four-star lodgings. In general, hotels provide a room with private bathroom, often a telephone and usually a TV with cable. Sometimes they have a *confitería* or restaurant and almost always include breakfast in the price. In the top categories you will have room and laundry service, a swimming pool, a bar, shopping galleries and perhaps a gym (which, in the three- to four-star range, amounts to little more than a pile of dumbbells and a squeaky exercise bike).

Rentals & Homestays

House and apartment rentals can save you money if you're staying in one place for an extended period. In resort locations, such as towns along the Atlantic coast (Mar del Plata, Pinamar etc) or Bariloche, you can lodge several people for the price of one by seeking an apartment and cooking your own meals. Tourist offices and newspapers are good sources for listings. For rental resources in Buenos Aires, see p109.

During the tourist season, mostly in the interior, families rent rooms to visitors. Often these are excellent bargains, permitting access to cooking and laundry facilities and hot showers, as well as encouraging contact with Argentines. Generally, we do not cover homestays in this book, since they change regularly. Tourist offices in most smaller towns (but even in cities as large as Salta and Mendoza) maintain lists of such accommodations.

ACTIVITIES

Argentina has a cornucopia of outdoor activities, offering trekking in the Lake District and Patagonia, mountaineering in Mendoza and San Juan, plus snow sports, cycling and fishing. For more information, see p53.

BUSINESS HOURS

Traditionally, business hours in Argentina start at 8am and break at midday *siesta* (rest) for three or even four hours, during which people return home for lunch and a brief nap. After siesta, shops reopen until 8pm or 9pm. This schedule is still common in the provinces, but government offices and many businesses in Buenos Aires have adopted a more conventional 8am to 5pm schedule in the interests of 'greater efficiency.'

Throughout this book, we list opening hours for businesses only when they deviate from the standard business hours listed inside the front cover.

CHILDREN

Argentina is extremely child-friendly in terms of travel safety (except when it comes to car safety seats), health, people's attitudes and family-oriented activities. This is also a country where people frequently touch each other, so don't be surprised when your child is patted on the head or caressed on the cheek.

When it comes to public transport, Argentines are usually very helpful. It's common for someone sitting to give up a seat for a parent and child, and occasionally an older person may offer to put the child on his or her lap.

Most nonflashy restaurants provide a wide selection of food suitable for children (vegetables, pasta, meat, chicken, fish, French fries etc), but adult portions are normally so large that small children rarely need a separate order. Waiters are accustomed to providing extra plates and cutlery for children, though some places may add a small additional charge.

FUN FOR THE KIDS

Art museums? Boring. Churches (yawn). Bus rides – ouch. But worry not. There are plenty of ways to keep your kiddos' spirits high in Argentina. The following make great bargaining chips to keep the kids in check.

- Dinosaur exhibits – including multistory-tall skeletons and massive footprints – in Neuquén (see the boxed text, p378).
- Shopping for zany, unique and affordable kids clothes in Palermo Viejo, Buenos Aires (p131).
- Horseback rides during a stay on an *estancia* (opposite).
- Glaciar Perito Moreno and icebergs in Parque Nacional Los Glaciares (p478).
- Tandem paragliding flight in La Cumbre, Córdoba (p322).
- Two words: ice cream. It's outstanding in Argentina.

For what to do with kids in Buenos Aires, see p106.

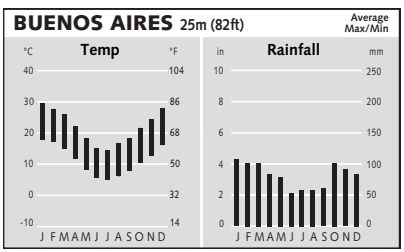
Whatever you do, don't forget to take the kids out for ice cream – it's a real Argentine treat!

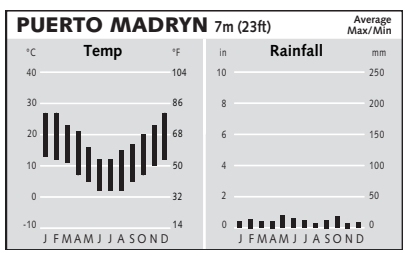
Breast-feeding in public is not uncommon, though most women are discreet and cover themselves. Poorly maintained public bathrooms may be a concern for some parents. Always carry toilet paper and baby wipes. While a woman may take a young boy into the ladies' room, it is socially taboo for a man to take a girl of any age into the men's room.

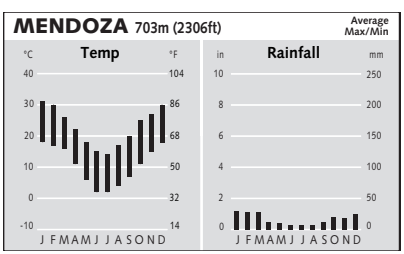
On buses, small children can share a seat with their parents to save money; on sleeper buses (see p618), this rarely proves uncomfortable.

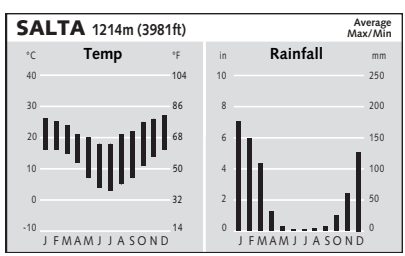
CLIMATE CHARTS

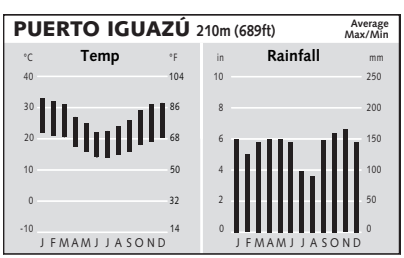
From the scorching subtropical summers of Chaco and Formosa provinces, to the freezing, gale-force winter winds of Tierra del Fuego, Argentina has wildly varied climates. For information on the best time to visit the country, see p18.

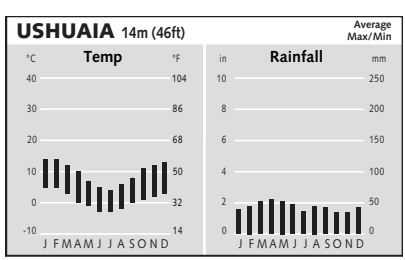












COURSES

Since the devaluation of the peso, Argentina has become a hot destination in which to learn Spanish. Most opportunities for Spanish-language instruction are based in Buenos Aires (see p106), though larger cities such as Mendoza (p344) and Córdoba (p313) are also excellent places to kick-start or hone your Spanish. Córdoba is a city of students, meaning you will feel right at home going to school, and you will also find plenty of opportunities to set up learning exchanges with local students.

Small-group instruction or individual tutoring offer the best options for improving language skills, and are affordable options. Rates average about AR$60 to AR$75 per hour (one-on-one) or AR$600 to AR$800 per week.

Tango classes are hugely popular in Buenos Aires, where group lessons cost anywhere from AR$15 to AR$40. For more information see the boxed text, p125.

Cooking classes, both for Argentine and international cuisine, are available in Buenos Aires (see p106).

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Argentine officials are generally courteous and reasonable toward tourists. Electronic items, including laptops, cameras and cell (mobile) phones, can be brought into the country duty free, provided they are not intended for resale. If you're over 18 you may also bring in up to 2L of alcohol, 400 cigarettes and 50 cigars. If you're entering with expensive computer, photographic and/or other electronic equipment, you should play it safe and declare it. Folks rarely have problems entering with the usual electronic items.

If you're entering Argentina from a neighboring country, officials focus on different things. Travelers southbound from the central Andean countries may be searched for drugs, while those from bordering countries will have fruits and vegetables confiscated. Carrying illegal drugs will pretty much get you into trouble no matter which country you're coming from.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

For tourists, Argentina is one of the safest countries in Latin America. This isn't to say you should skip down the street drunk with your money belt strapped to your head, but with a little common sense you can visit Argentina's big cities as safely as you could London, Paris or New York. That said, crime has been on the rise.

Petty Crime

The economic crisis of 1999–2001 plunged a lot of people into poverty, and street crime (pickpocketing, bag-snatching and armed robbery) has subsequently risen, especially in Buenos Aires (see p94) and, more recently, Mendoza (see p342). Still, most people feel perfectly safe in the big cities. In the small towns of the provinces you'd have to *search* for a crook to rob you.

Bus terminals are the most common places tourists become separated from their possessions. For the most part bus terminals are safe, as they're usually full of families traveling and saying goodbyes, but they're also prime grounds for bag-snatchers. Always keep an eagle eye on your goods. This is especially true in Buenos Aires' Retiro station.

Other places to be wary are tourist destinations and sidewalk cafe or restaurant tables.

Pickets & Protests

Street protests have become part of daily life in Argentina, especially in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo area, so it's wise to be aware of current political events. Generally these have little effect on tourists other than blocking traffic or making it impossible to see Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo and the Casa Rosada (where protests occur almost weekly). The country has many *gremios* or *sindicatos* (trade unions), and it seems that one of them is always on strike. Transportation unions sometimes go on strike, which can affect travelers directly by delaying domestic flights and bus services. It's always a good idea to keep your eye on the news before traveling.

Drivers

Being a pedestrian in Argentina is perhaps one of the country's more difficult ventures. Many Argentine drivers jump the gun when the traffic signal is about to change to green, drive extremely fast and change lanes unpredictably. Even though pedestrians at corners and crosswalks have legal right of way (ha!), very few drivers respect this and will hardly slow down when you are crossing. Be especially careful of buses, which can be reckless and, because of their large size, particularly painful.

Police & Military

The police and military have a reputation for being corrupt or irresponsible, but both are generally helpful and courteous to tourists. If you feel you're being patted down for a bribe (most often if you're driving), you can respond by tactfully paying up (see p604) or asking the officer to accompany you to the police station to take care of it. The latter will likely lead the officer to drop it – though it could lead you in to the labyrinthine bureaucracy of the Argentine police system. Pretending you don't understand Spanish may also frustrate a potential bribe.

Smoking

Many Argentines are heavy smokers, and you can't help but be exposed to it on the street. The good news for nonsmokers is that Argentina passed a smoking ban for restaurants, cafes, internet cafes, bars and

other public places in 2006. Regulations and enforcement differ throughout the country. Smoking is prohibited on buses and all domestic flights.

DISCOUNT CARDS

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is available for AR$43 through the student and discount travel agency **Asatej** (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4114-7500; www.asatej.net; Florida 835, Room 320, 3rd fl, Buenos Aires). It can help travelers obtain discounts on public transportation and admissions to museums. Any official-looking university identification may be an acceptable substitute. An HI card, available for AR$60 at any HI hostel or the **HI office** (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4511-8723; www.hostels.org.ar; Florida 835, Room 319, 3rd fl, Buenos Aires), will get you discounts on your stay at any HI facility (see p598). The **minihostel** (www.minihostels.com) and **HoLa** (www.holahostels.com) cards work in a similar way for a different network of hostels.

Travelers over the age of 60 can sometimes obtain senior-citizen discounts on museum admissions and the like. Usually a passport with date of birth is sufficient evidence of age.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Argentine Embassies & Consulates

Argentina has diplomatic representation throughout the world. A quick internet search will turn up the *embajada Argentina* (Argentine embassy) in your home country with nearest consulates to you.

Embassies & Consulates in Argentina

Following is a list of embassies and consulates, most of which are in Buenos Aires. Some countries have both an embassy and a consulate here, but only the most central location is listed.

Australia Buenos Aires (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4779-3500; Villanueva 1400, Palermo)

Bolivia Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4394-1463; Corrientes 545, 2nd fl, Microcentro); Jujuy (Map p248; ☎ 0388-424-0501; Independencia 1098); La Quiaca (☎ 0388-422283; cnr Árabe Siria & 9 de Julio); Salta (Map p262; ☎ 0387-421-1040; Mariano Boedo 34)

Brazil Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4515-6500; Carlos Pellegrini 1363, 5th fl, Retiro); Paso de los Libres (☎ 03772-425444; Calle Bartolomé Mitre 894 at Sarmiento); Puerto Iguazú (Map p227; ☎ 03757-421348; Córdoba 264)

Canada Buenos Aires (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4808-1000; Tagle 2828, Recoleta)

Chile Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4331-6228; Diagonal Roque Sáenz Peña 547, 2nd fl, Microcentro); Bariloche (Map p402; ☎ 02944-423050; Av Juan Manuel de Rosas 180); Esquel (Map p458; ☎ 02945-451189; Molinari 754); Mendoza (off Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-425-4844; Paso de los Andes 1147); Neuquén (Map p377; ☎ 0299-442-2727; La Rioja 241); Río Gallegos (Map p454; ☎ 02966-422364; Mariano Moreno 148); Salta (Map p262; ☎ 0387-431-1857; Santiago del Estero 965); Ushuaia (Map p519; ☎ 02901-430909; Jainén 50)

France Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4315-4290; Santa Fe 846, 4th fl, Retiro); Mendoza (off Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-423-1542; Av Houssay 790); Salta (Map p262; ☎ 0387-423-5797; Tucumán 380); Tucumán (Map p281; ☎ 0381-421-8202; Crisóstomo Álvarez 471)

Germany Buenos Aires (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4778-2500; Villanueva 1055, Belgrano); Mendoza (Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-429-6539; Montevideo 127, 2nd fl, No 6); Posadas (Map p215; ☎ 0387-422-9088; Caeros 1874); Tucumán (off Map p281; ☎ 0381-425-5528; Remedios de Escalada 680, Yerba Buena)

Israel Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4338-2500; Av de Mayo 701, 10th fl, Microcentro); Mendoza (off Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-428-2140; Lamadrid 738)

Italy Buenos Aires (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4114-4800; Calle Billinghurst 2577, No 1425); Mendoza (Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-520-1400; Necochea 712); Salta (Map p262; ☎ 0387-432-1532; Santiago del Estero 497); Tucumán (Map p281; ☎ 0381-422-3830; San Martín 623, 5th fl)

Japan Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4318-8200; Bouchard 547, 17th fl, Microcentro)

Netherlands Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4338-0050; Olga Cossettini 831, 3rd fl, Edificio Porteño II, Puerto Madero)

Paraguay Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4814-4803; Viamonte 1851, Balvanera); Corrientes (☎ 03783-426576; Córdoba 969); Posadas (Map p215; ☎ 03752-423858; San Lorenzo 179); Puerto Iguazú (Map p227; ☎ 03757-424230; Córdoba 370)

Peru Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4382-3916; Av Rivadavia 1501, Congreso)

Spain Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4814-9100; Guido 1770, Recoleta); Mendoza (off Map pp340-1; ☎ 0261-425-3947; Agustín Alvarez 455); Río Gallegos (Map p454; ☎ 02966-422131; Av Roca 866); Rosario (Map p180; ☎ 0341-447-0100; Santa Fe 768)

UK Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4808-2200; Dr Luis Agote 2412, Recoleta)

Uruguay Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4807-3040; Av Las Heras 1915, Recoleta); Colón (☎ 03447-421999; San Martín 417); Concordia (Map p210; ☎ 0345-421-0380; Asunción 131); Gualeguaychú (Map p204; ☎ 03446-422466; Rivadavia 510)

USA Buenos Aires (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-5777-4533; Colombia 4300, Palermo)

FOOD

For a mouthwatering idea of all the food you can eat while traveling in Argentina, see p61. Compared with Europe and North America, restaurant prices in much of Argentina are quite affordable. However, in places such as Buenos Aires and especially Patagonia, good-value meals are harder to come by.

Eating sections throughout this book are arranged by budget, with the most economical options listed first. Restaurants that charge up to AR$20 for a main course (what we abbreviate as 'mains' in listings) fall into the budget category. Budget restaurants are usually modest, often family oriented and, more often than not, serve Argentine standbys like pastas, *milanesas* (breaded fried veal or chicken) and sandwiches. Ordering house wine by the glass or *jarra* (carafe) keeps the price down. If you're pinching pesos, you can almost always find budget restaurants and keep your eating costs low (but remember there are a lot of Argentines trying to do the same).

Our midrange category includes restaurants that charge AR$20 to AR$40 for main courses. You can eat very well at midrange eateries and usually get out the door having spent under AR$60 for a complete meal, often including dessert and wine. Top-end restaurants charge over AR$40 for a main course. These are plentiful in Buenos Aires (thanks to all the money in the city and the higher cost of living) and in Patagonia (thanks to tourism and the region's isolation).

For the standard opening hours of restaurants, see the inside front cover.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELERS

Since the end of military rule, and with the declining influence of the Catholic church, Argentina has become increasingly gay-friendly. Buenos Aires is one of the world's top gay destinations – with dedicated hotels and B&Bs; bars, nightclubs and restaurants; and even gay cruises calling at the port. The capital is home to South America's largest annual gay pride parade and has numerous gay and lesbian organizations and clubs. In 2002 Buenos Aires became the first city in Latin America to legalize civil unions between same-sex couples, granting some civil-union rights similar to those held by heterosexual couples. And in Ushuaia on December 28, 2009, two Argentine men became the first same-sex couple to legally marry in Latin America.

Although Buenos Aires (and, to a lesser extent, Argentina's other large cities) is becoming increasingly tolerant, most of the rest of Argentina still feels uncomfortable with homosexuality. Homophobia rarely takes the form of physical violence, however; instead it manifests through inappropriate jokes and chatty disapproval any time the subject comes up. That said, gay people regularly travel throughout the country to return home with nothing but praise.

When it comes to public affection, Argentine men are more physically demonstrative than their North American and European counterparts. Behaviors such as kissing on the cheek in greeting or a vigorous embrace are innocuous even to those who express unease with homosexuality. Lesbians walking hand in hand should attract little attention, since heterosexual Argentine women frequently do so, but this would be very conspicuous behavior for men. When in doubt, it's best to be discreet.

For much more on what's gay in Buenos Aires, see the boxed text, p128.

Also check out the following websites:

Gayscape (www.gayscape.com) Handful of useful links on the Argentina page.

Global Gayz.com (www.globalgayz.com) Has a South America section full of news, tips and links about gay travel in the region, with a small section on Argentina.

International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA; www.ilga.org) Click 'Countries' and find the Argentina page for news and information. Also links to international lesbian, gay and transgender organizations.

Mundo Gay (www.mundogay.com) Noteworthy online publication out of Buenos Aires; club listings, chat, blog and more. Mostly for men, and all in Spanish.

HOLIDAYS

Government offices and businesses are closed on Argentina's numerous public holidays. If the holiday falls on a midweek day or weekend day, it's often bumped to the nearest Monday. Public transport options are also more limited and fill up fast. The following list does not include provincial holidays, which may vary considerably. For Argentina's best festivals and events, see p22.

January 1 New Year's Day

March 24 Día de la Memoria; anniversary of the day that started the 1976 dictatorship and subsequent Dirty War.

March/April Semana Santa (Easter week) – dates vary; most businesses close on 'Good Thursday' and Good Friday; major travel week.

April 2 Día de las Malvinas; honors the fallen Argentine soldiers from the Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands) war in 1982.
May 1 Labor Day.
May 25 Revolución de Mayo; commemorates the 1810 revolution against Spain.
June 20 Día de la Bandera (Flag Day); anniversary of death of Manuel Belgrano, creator of Argentina's flag and military leader.
July 9 Independence Day
August 17 Día del Libertador San Martín; marks the anniversary of José de San Martín's death (1778–1850).
October 12 Día de la Raza (Columbus Day)
December 8 Día de la Concepción Inmaculada; religious holiday that celebrates the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.
December 25 Christmas Day

INSURANCE

In addition to health insurance (p622) and car insurance (p620), it's wise to purchase travel insurance that protects baggage, valuables and canceled flights. Keep in mind that some insurance policies do not cover certain 'high risk' activities, usually of the extreme sport type, which can be anything from rock climbing to paragliding. Be sure to read the fine print and choose a policy that best suits your needs.

Keep your insurance records separate from other possessions in case you have to make a claim (a good trick is to email them to yourself and keep them accessible in your Inbox). Worldwide travel insurance is available at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services. You can buy, extend and claim online anytime – even if you're already on the road.

INTERNET ACCESS

For Sleeping listings throughout this book, we've included a 💻 symbol for those accommodations that provide internet access for their guests. If a hotel offers wireless service, our symbol is 📶. For a list of recommended internet resources, see p21.

Rarely is an Argentine town – no matter how small – without an internet cafe. In cities, internet cafes seem to occupy every other building, with even the smallest *locutorios* (telephone centers) having a few computers. Internet cafes charge AR$4 to AR$6 per hour in most cities. To find the *@ (arroba)* symbol, try holding down the Alt key and typing 64. Or ask the attendant *'¿Cómo se hace la arroba?'* ('How do you make the @ sign?').

Open, free wireless networks (such as wi-fi) are commonplace at cafes and hotels throughout Argentina, even in small towns. Traveling with a laptop can be convenient, but unless you know what you're doing, it's fraught with potential problems. Remember, the power supply in Argentina (220 volts) may differ from that at home, so if your laptop doesn't have an internal voltage converter (many do), you'll have to purchase one. If you do buy a converter, be sure you buy one that's rated for the electronic devices you're using – the standard power converters sold at most luggage and travel stores are meant only for hairdryers, battery chargers and the like.

For more information on traveling with laptops and other electronics check out Steve Kropla's excellent website at www.kropla.com.

LEGAL MATTERS

Argentina presently enjoys civilian government, but the police and military both have a reputation for corruption and abuse of power. However, as a tourist it is very unlikely you will ever experience this if you obey the law. Police, however, can demand identification at any moment and for whatever reason. Always carry your documents and always be courteous and cooperative.

The legal drinking age is 18. Though it's not uncommon to see folks drinking beer on the street or in plazas, it's technically illegal to do so. Small-scale use of marijuana has recently been decriminalized, but it's always a good idea to be discreet. Cocaine and other substances that are illegal in the USA and most European countries are also illegal here. Though constitutionally a person is innocent until proven guilty, people can be held for years without a trial. If arrested, you have the constitutional right to a lawyer, a telephone call and to remain silent.

No Argentine in their right mind would directly offer a *coima* (bribe) to a police officer. However, things are often taken care of on the spot by asking *'¿Como podemos arreglar esto mas rápido?'* ('What can we do to expedite this situation?') or *'¿Puedo pagar la multa ahora'* ('Can I pay the ticket now?').

MAPS

Tourist offices throughout the country provide free city maps that are good enough for tooling around town. **International Travel Maps**

(www.itmb.com) publishes fairly useful Buenos Aires and Argentina maps.

With offices in nearly every Argentine city, the Automóvil Club Argentino (ACA; p619) publishes excellent maps of provinces and cities that are particularly good for driving and trip planning. Card-carrying members of foreign automobile clubs can get discounts. Not as good but still handy are the red *Argenguide* maps, available at most YPF (gas or petrol) stations.

Geography nerds will adore the topographic maps available from the **Instituto Geográfico Militar** (Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4576-5576; www.igm.gob.ar; Cabildo 381, Palermo, Buenos Aires; 🕒 7am-2pm Mon-Fri). These maps are difficult to obtain outside the capital.

MONEY

The Argentine unit of currency is the peso (AR$). Prices in this book are quoted in Argentine pesos unless otherwise noted. See the inside front cover for exchange rates. Also see p18 for information on costs.

Carrying cash and an ATM card is the way to go in Argentina.

ATMs

Cajeros automáticos (ATMs) are found in nearly every city and town in Argentina and can also be used for cash advances on major credit cards. They're the best way to get money, and nearly all have instructions in English. Almost all ATMs use Cirrus, Plus or Link systems. There may be limits per withdrawal (anywhere from AR$300 to AR$1000), but you can withdraw several times per day, up to perhaps AR$3000.

When getting cash out, consider withdrawing an odd number like 290 pesos, instead of 300. This will guarantee you some small bills; just *try* breaking a 100 peso note for a 10 peso sale – you'll get groans for sure.

Also, a fee of AR$11.46 may be charged on ATM transactions by the *local* bank (not including charges by your home bank, which are extra). Note that this is a *per transaction* fee, so consider taking out your maximum allowed limit – if you feel safe doing so.

Cash

Paper money comes in denominations of two, five, 10, 20, 50 and 100 pesos. One peso equals 100 *centavos;* coins come in denominations of one (rare), five, 10, 25 and 50 *centavos,* and one peso. At present, US dollars are accepted by many tourist-oriented businesses, but you should always carry some pesos.

Counterfeiting, of both local and US bills, has become a problem in recent years, and merchants are very careful when accepting large denominations. You should be too; look for a clear watermark or running thread on the largest bills. This is especially important in nightclubs or taxis (where you should avoid using large bills in the first place; see p136).

Changing large denomination bills is a huge problem throughout the country (and a major gripe for Argentines and tourists alike). Whenever you can, change your AR$100 and AR$50 bills at the bank to avoid problems. Large supermarkets and restaurants are good places to get rid of AR$100 bills. Taxi drivers, kiosks and small stores rarely change them, and you could easily find yourself without a means of paying.

Credit Cards

The most widely accepted credit cards are Visa and MasterCard, though American Express

SPARE SOME CHANGE...PRETTY PLEASE?

You will very quickly notice that change in small bills – but especially coins – is very hard to come by in Argentina, and especially Buenos Aires. Some vendors won't sell a small item if it involves giving up precious *monedas*. Theories abound as to why this problem exists, but the situation is certainly exacerbated by bus companies. Buses take only coins, which are never deposited at banks. Instead, they're sold on the black market for a 5% to 10% markup. In BA a magnetic card system is theoretically in the works to ease this ridiculous situation.

In the meantime, break large bills when making big transactions, like at restaurants. Save up a stash of small bills and coins for small purchases, and never give up coins unless you're begged to – and you will be. Some people line up in special queues at Retiro and Constitución train stations, where you can get up to AR$20 in coins without a 'fee.' (Surprisingly, banks only give out a few pesos' worth.) There's one silver lining – you won't be weighed down with too much change.

and a few others are also valid in many establishments. Before you leave home, warn your credit-card company that you'll be using it abroad or it may put a hold on the card thinking it was lost.

Some businesses add a *recargo* (surcharge) of 5% to 10% toward credit-card purchases. Also, the actual amount you'll eventually pay depends upon the exchange rate not at the time of sale, but when the purchase is posted to an overseas account, sometimes weeks later.

If you use a credit card to pay for restaurant bills, be aware that tips can't usually be added to the bill. Many lower-end hotels and private tour companies will not accept credit cards. Holders of MasterCard and Visa can get cash advances at Argentine banks and most ATMs.

Moneychangers

US dollars are by far the preferred foreign currency, although Chilean and Uruguayan pesos can be readily exchanged at the borders. Cash dollars and euros can be changed at banks and *cambios* (exchange houses) in most larger cities, but other currencies can be difficult to change outside Buenos Aires.

Taxes & Refunds

Under limited circumstances, foreign visitors may obtain refunds of the *impuesto al valor agregado* (IVA; value-added tax) on purchases of Argentine products upon their departure from the country. A 'Tax Free' (in English) window decal identifies merchants participating in this program. Hang on to your invoice and you can obtain refunds in Buenos Aires at Ezeiza, Aeroparque Jorge Newbery and the Buquebus terminal at Darsena Norte. For more information see the boxed text, p131.

Tipping & Bargaining

In restaurants it's customary to tip about 10% of the bill, but in times of economic distress (ie these days), many Argentines overlook the custom. In general, waiters are poorly paid, so if you can afford to eat out, you can afford to tip. Even a small *propina* (tip) will be appreciated, but note that restaurant tips can't be added to a credit card bill. Taxi drivers don't expect tips, but it's customary to round up to the nearest peso. Unlike many other South American countries, bargaining is generally not the norm in Argentina.

Traveler's Checks

Very high commissions are levied on traveler's checks, which are difficult to cash anywhere and specifically *not* recommended for travel in Argentina. Stores will *not* accept traveler's checks, and outside Buenos Aires it's even harder to change them.

PHOTOGRAPHY

For tips on how to photograph people, cities, landscapes and more, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's easy-to-carry *Travel Photography* book by Richard I'Anson. Avoid taking photos of military or police, as you may have your camera confiscated.

Digital

If you're shooting digital and plan to be taking a lot of photos, invest in a portable hard drive. It's the best way to back up your files. If you don't plan to travel with a portable hard drive, you can easily back up your photos to CD, DVD or flash drive at an internet cafe (see p604). Nearly all internet cafes have at least one machine with usable USB ports and a CD burner.

Film

Film in Argentina is comparable to that in North America and Europe, both in quality and price. But it's generally cheaper to develop film here than it is in Europe or the USA. Developing quality is generally high, so do it before you leave for home and save yourself a bundle. For slide developing, you'll have fewer choices except in Buenos Aires.

POST

Correo Argentino (www.correoargentino.com.ar), the privatized postal service, has become more reliable over the years, but mail still regularly gets waylaid and occasionally gets lost. International letters and postcards under 20g cost AR$6; a letter from 20g to 150g costs AR$18. Certified *(certificado)* international letters under 20g cost AR$17; from 20g to 150g it's AR$29.

Domestic couriers, such as **Andreani** (www.andreani.com.ar) and **OCA** (www.oca.com.ar), and international couriers like DHL and FedEx are far more dependable than the post office. But they're also far more expensive. The last two have offices only in the largest cities, while the first two usually serve as their connections to the interior of the country.

If a package is being sent to you, expect to wait a long time for it to turn up within the system (or to receive notice of its arrival). Nearly all parcels sent to Buenos Aires go to the international Retiro office, near the Buquebus terminal. To collect the package you'll have to wait (sometimes hours) first to get it and then to have it checked by customs. There's also a small processing fee. Don't expect any valuables to make it through.

You can send packages under 2kg from any post office, but anything heavier needs to go through *aduana* (a customs office). In Buenos Aires, this office is near Retiro bus terminal and is called Correo Internacional (see p94).

RELOCATING TO ARGENTINA

After the devaluation of the peso in 2002, foreigners began moving to Argentina – where the cost of living for those earning dollars, euros or pounds was low – in huge numbers. Although prices for just about everything (including food, apartments and transportation) have been on the rise, Argentina is still a very popular destination for expats on the make. Levels of relocation vary: countless folks simply rent an apartment in Buenos Aires for a year or two and leave the country every three months to renew their visa. Others go the full route, purchasing property and jumping through the hoops of legal residency. Whatever you decide to do, don't expect to find work in Argentina, unless you're going to be employed by a foreign company (for more on work, see p612) or become an entrepreneur.

Opening a bank account in Argentina is a bit of a hassle. You can't just walk in with AR$1000 and open one. Requirements vary by bank, but generally you need the minimum equivalent of US$500, plus a passport and/or picture ID, proof of domicile (ie an electricity bill), plus – and here's the kicker – a CDI (a national ID card number) and/or CUIL/CUIT (employment and tax ID numbers). Obtaining these requires proof of residency and/or legal employment. Basically, if you just want to open an account to avoid withdrawal fees from your home-country bank, it may not be worth the trouble.

For those considering long-term relocation, including buying property, there are some excellent resources out there:

Argentina Residency & Citizenship Advisors (ARCA; www.argentinaresidency.com) Helps foreigners obtain legal residency and citizenship.

BABlackJumpers (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BABlackJumpers/) Sometimes zany newsgroup for expats in Argentina.

BANewcomers (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BANewcomers/) Yahoo newsgroup; good place to throw out questions to expats in Argentina.

Buenos Aires Expatriates Group (www.baexpats.org) Popular expat website.

Expatargentina (www.expatargentina.wordpress.com) One expat's eclectic musings on living in BA.

Just Landed (www.justlanded.com/english/Argentina) More info for expats.

Transitions Abroad (www.transitionsabroad.com) Excellent, longtime resource for folks living, working and studying abroad.

For a list of apartment rental services in Buenos Aires, see p109. For internet resources specific to Buenos Aires, see p93.

SHOPPING

Argentina is a great place to shop, especially for anyone traveling on strong foreign currencies. When it comes to fashion, Buenos Aires is one of the world's best cities to shop, with everything from boutique and independent designers, who sell their wares at street fairs, to big-name brands in BA's slickest shopping centers. The city's Palermo Viejo neighborhood is arguably the city's best area to shop.

Argentina is also famous for its leather, and downtown Buenos Aires is home to countless leather shops (p132) that cater to the tourist trade, selling leather jackets, handbags and shoes. Quality and prices can vary greatly, so shop around before buying.

Found everywhere, *mate* paraphernalia makes great souvenirs. Gourds and *bombillas* (metal straws with filters for drinking *mate*) range from inexpensive aluminum to elaborate and expensive gold and silver. Another great buy of the traditional sort is the gaucho (or criollo) knife. These usually have intricately woven leather or bone handles, and the blades vary widely. They're sold throughout the country, but the pampas town of Tandil (p150) is particularly famous for its cutlery.

In artisans *ferias* (fairs), found throughout Argentina, the variety of handicrafts is extensive and interesting. The best *ferias* are likely those in Córdoba (p317) and El Bolsón (p414). The Lake District town of Bariloche (p401) is best known for its local chocolate. In the province of Salta, the distinctive *ponchos de Güemes* make for memorable purchases.

Argentines are well read and interested in both national and world literature, and Buenos Aires has a good selection of general- and special-interest bookstores. Since the end of the military dictatorship, the capital has reestablished itself as a publishing center; April's Feria del Libro (book fair; p108) is South America's largest, with over 600 exhibitors drawing over a million visitors. Foreign-language books tend to be very expensive, however.

Wine, of course, is another fabulous buy, but bringing it home is no longer as easy as it once was, primarily because most international airlines now prohibit passengers from carrying bottles aboard. You can pack a few bottles into your checked luggage, but you'd better be sure they're well padded. **Anuva Wines** (www.anuvawines.com) will ship to many US states for a nominal fee.

For refunds on tax-free items, see Taxes & Refunds (p606).

SOLO TRAVELERS

Traveling alone can be one of the most rewarding experiences in life. You're far more likely to meet locals and fellow travelers – which is really what travel's all about – without the shell of companionship. Mind you, it can get lonely at times, and it's certainly nice to have a mate to watch your bags for you (or your back when you're snapping photos), but these benefits are often outweighed by the joy of meeting locals. Argentines are quick to invite solo travelers to an *asado* or elsewhere, and even quicker to strike up conversation. What's more, with Argentina's abundance of new hostels, you can easily hook up with other travelers when you're feeling lonely.

Traveling alone as a woman, unfortunately, inherently entails more risk than traveling solo as a man. But countless women safely travel solo in Argentina every day; it's one of the safest countries in South America to do so. For more information for women travelers, see p612.

TELEPHONE & FAX

Two companies, Telecom and Telefónica, split the country's telephone services. For emergencies dial ☎ 107, for police ☎ 101 (or ☎ 911 in some larger cities) and for fire ☎ 100. Directory assistance is ☎ 110.

The easiest way to make a local phone call is to find a *locutorio,* which has private cabins where you make your calls, and then pay all at once at the register. *Locutorios* can be found on practically every other block. They cost about the same as street phones, are much quieter and you won't run out of coins. Most *locutorios* are supplied with phone books.

To use street phones, you'll pay with regular coins or *tarjetas telefónicas* (magnetic phone cards available at many kiosks). You'll only be able to speak for a limited time before you get cut off, so carry enough credit.

The cheapest way to make an international call is to use a phone card (see opposite). International calls can also be made at *locutorios*.

Faxes are inexpensive, widely used in Argentina and available at most *locutorios*.

CALLING ONLINE

Services like **Skype** (www.skype.com) and **Google Voice** (www.google.com/voice) make calling home cheap. It's easily done at many internet cafes in Argentina.

CELL (MOBILE) PHONES

Argentina operates on the GSM 850/1900 network, so, if you have a triband GSM cell phone (sometimes called a 'world phone' in the USA), you should be able to use it in Argentina. If you plan to use your own provider, you probably have to contact the company to have your phone unlocked for international use. Unless you have a plan tailored specifically toward international use, your rates on calls made and accepted in Argentina will likely be high.

The best option with an unlocked triband GSM phone, however, is to purchase a SIM chip/card (about AR$15) and insert it into your phone; you'll get a local phone number this way. Then you pay to add credits as you need them. Both SIM chips and credits can be bought at many kiosks or *locutorios*; look for the *'recarga facil'* signs. Many Argentines use this system with their cell phones. Phone unlocking services are available; ask around.

If you plan to travel with an iphone or other G3 smart phone, prepare yourself – you may need to purchase an international plan to avoid being hit by a huge bill for roaming costs. Do an internet search for 'iphone international use' for current tips.

Another option is purchasing a new cell phone in Argentina. You can pick one up for as little as AR$150, usually with some minutes already on the phone – but most companies

require you to sign a contract. Cell-phone rentals are also available in Buenos Aires.

Finally, you can rent or purchase an international phone or a prepaid international SIM card from one of numerous companies that likely operate in your home country.

This is a fast-changing field so check the current situation before you travel; take a look at www.kropla.com or do an internet search on GSM cell phones for the myriad of products on the market.

PHONE CODES

When dialing abroad from Argentina, you must first dial '00,' followed by the country code (see the boxed text, below). The *característica* (area code) for Buenos Aires is ☎ 011, and all telephone numbers in the Greater Buenos Aires area have eight digits. Area codes vary wildly throughout the provinces; those of larger cities have four digits (always beginning with a zero), followed by a seven-digit telephone number. Smaller towns have six-digit telephone numbers and five-digit area codes (again, always beginning with a zero). Basically, when calling from outside an area code, you're always going to dial 11 numbers.

Cellular phone numbers in Argentina are always preceded by '15.' After that simple fact, it gets confusing. Usually you just dial the regional code corresponding to the person's location, regardless of where the phone was purchased. Other times, the regional code you must dial depends on where the person bought the cellular phone. So you may have to try more than once to get through. Your best bet is starting with the regional code where the person is located, followed by '15,' then the number. If you're calling a cell phone from within the same regional code, you don't have to dial the regional code. We've listed regional codes with cell numbers throughout this book, so always try that option first when calling from another region. For information on calling an Argentine cell phone from outside that country, see the boxed text, left.

Toll-free numbers begin with ☎ 0800.

CALLING ARGENTINA FROM ABROAD

To call a number in Argentina from another country, dial your international access code, then the country code for Argentina (☎ 54), then the area code (without the zero) and number.

When dialing an Argentine cell phone from outside Argentina, dial your country's international access code, then ☎ 54, then ☎ 9, then the area code without the 0, then the number – leaving out the ☎ 15.

PHONECARDS

Telephone calling cards are sold at nearly all kiosks and make domestic and international calls far cheaper. However, they must be used from a fixed line such as a home or hotel telephone (provided you can dial outside the hotel). They cannot be used at most pay phones. Some *locutorios* allow you to use them, and although they levy a surcharge, the call is still far cheaper than dialing direct. When purchasing one, tell the clerk the country you will call so they give you the right card.

TIME

Argentina is three hours behind GMT and generally does not observe daylight saving time (though this situation can easily change). When it's noon in Argentina, it's 10am in New York, 7am in San Francisco, 3pm in London and 1pm the next day in Sydney (add one hour to these times during daylight saving). Argentina tells time by the 24-hour clock.

TOILETS

Public toilets in Argentina are better than in most of South America, but there are certainly exceptions. For the truly squeamish, the better restaurants and cafes are good alternatives. Large shopping malls often have public bathrooms, as do international fast-food chains. Always carry your own toilet paper, since it often runs out in public restrooms, and don't expect luxuries such as soap, hot water and paper towels either. In smaller towns, some public toilets charge a small fee for entry.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Argentina's national tourist board is the Secretaría de Turismo de la Nación; its main office is in Buenos Aires (p94). Almost every city or town has a tourist office, usually on or near the main plaza or at the bus terminal. Each Argentine province also has its own representation in Buenos Aires. Most (though not all) of these are well organized, often offering a computerized database of tourist information, and are well worth a visit before heading for the provinces.

Another excellent source of information and a generally indispensable resource is **South American Explorers** (Map pp84-5; ☎ 5275-0137; www.saexplorers.org; Roque Saénz Peña 1142, 7A), which maintains a clubhouse in central Buenos Aires.

The offices listed here are all provincial tourist offices located in Buenos Aires (area code ☎ 011).

Buenos Aires (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4373-2508; www.bue.gov.ar; Av Callao 237)
Catamarca (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4374-6891; www.catamarca.gov.ar; Córdoba 2080)
Chaco (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4372-5209; www.chaco.gov.ar; Av Callao 322)
Chubut (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4382-2009; www.chubut.gov.ar; Sarmiento 1172)
Córdoba (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4371-1688; www.cba.gov.ar; 4373-4277; Av Callao 332)
Corrientes (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4394-7418; www.corrientes.gov.ar; San Martín 333, 4th fl)
Entre Ríos (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4328-2284; www.entrerios.gov.ar; Suipacha 844)
Formosa (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4381-7048; www.casadeformosa.gov.ar; Hipólito Yrigoyen 1429)
Jujuy (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4393-6096; www.casadejujuy.gov.ar; Av Santa Fe 967)
La Pampa (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4326-0511; www.lapampa.gov.ar; Suipacha 346)
La Rioja (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4815-1929; www.larioja.gov.ar; Av Callao 745)
Mendoza (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4371-7301, 4371-0835; www.mendoza.gov.ar; Av Callao 445)
Misiones (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4322-0686; www.misiones.gov.ar; Av Santa Fe 989)
Neuquén (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4343-2324; www.neuquen.gov.ar; Maipú 48)
Río Negro (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4371-7273; www.rionegro.gov.ar; Tucumán 1916)
Salta (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4326-1314; www.turismosalta.gov.ar; Roque Sáenz Peña 933)
San Juan (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4382-9241; www.sanjuan.gov.ar; Sarmiento 1251)
San Luis (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-5778-1621; www.sanluis.gov.ar; Azcuénaga 1087)
Santa Cruz (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4343-8478; www.casadesantacruz.gov.ar; 25 de Mayo 279)
Santa Fe (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4342-0408; www.santafe.gov.ar; 25 de Mayo 178)
Santiago del Estero (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4326-3733; www.sde.gov.ar; Florida 274)
Tierra del Fuego (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4328-7040; www.tierradelfuego.org.ar; Esmeralda 783)
Tucumán (Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4322-0010; www.tucumanturismo.gov.ar; Suipacha 140)

With offices throughout the country, the Automóvil Club Argentino (ACA) is a useful source of good, up-to-date maps of provinces and cities that are useful for driving and trip planning. For more information, see p619.

TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES

Travelers with disabilities will find things somewhat difficult in Argentina. Those in wheelchairs in particular will quickly realize that many cities' narrow, busy and uneven sidewalks are difficult to negotiate. Crossing streets is also a problem, since not every corner has ramps and Argentine drivers don't have much patience for slower pedestrians, disabled or not. Nevertheless, Argentines with disabilities do get around, and in Buenos Aires there exist a few buses described as *piso bajo*, which lower to provide wheelchair lifts. Wheelchair curb ramps exist at many corners in Buenos Aires, but they're often broken beyond use.

Except at four- and five-star properties, hotels usually do not have wheelchair-accessible rooms (at least as they're known in other parts of the world), meaning doors are narrow and there is little space to move around inside the room. Bathrooms at midrange and budget hotels are notoriously small, making it difficult for anyone (disabled or not) to get around in. For truly accessible rooms, you'll have better luck in pricier hotels. Call ahead and ask specific questions – even if a hotel defines a room as wheelchair-accessible, it may not be up to standards to which you're accustomed.

Other than the use of Braille on ATMs, little effort has been dedicated to bettering accessibility for the blind. Stoplights are rarely equipped with sound alerts. The **Biblioteca Argentina Para Ciegos** (Argentine Library for the Blind; BAC; Map pp82-3; ☎ 011-4981-0137; www.bac.org.ar; Lezica 3909, Buenos Aires) maintains a Braille collection of over 3000 books, as well as other resources.

In Buenos Aires, **QRV Transportes Especiales** (☎ 011-4306-6635, 011-15-6863-9555; www.qrvtransportes.com.ar) offers private transport and city tours in vans fully equipped for wheelchair users. **BA Cultural Concierge** (www.baculturalconcierge.com) offers service for low-mobility travelers by helping with errands.

Also check out the following international organizations online, all of which offer links to other resources:

Access-able Travel Source www.access-able.com
Mobility International www.miusa.org

National Information Communication Awareness Network www.nican.com.au
Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality www.sath.org

VISAS

Nationals of the USA, Canada, most Western European countries, Australia and New Zealand do not need visas to visit Argentina. In theory, upon arrival all non-visa visitors must obtain a free tourist card, good for 90 days and renewable for 90 more. In practice, immigration officials issue these only at major border crossings, such as airports and on the ferries and hydrofoils between Buenos Aires and Uruguay. Although you should not toss your card away, losing it is no major catastrophe; at most exit points, immigration officials will provide immediate replacement for free.

However, for information on Argentina's new entry fee, which particularly affects Americans, Canadians and Australians, see p614.

Dependent children traveling without *both* parents theoretically need a notarized document certifying that both parents agree to the child's travel. Parents may also wish to bring a copy of the custody form; however, there's a good chance they won't be asked for either document.

Very short visits to neighboring countries usually do not require visas. Despite what a travel agency might say, you probably don't need a Brazilian visa to cross from the Argentine town of Puerto Iguazú to Foz do Iguaçu and/or Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, as long as you return the same day. You should bring your passport, however, and double- check this information – ideally with someone who has done it recently. For more information on entering Brazil, see the boxed text (p225).

The same is true at the Bolivian border town of Villazón, near La Quiaca (see the boxed text, p259). Officials at the Paraguayan crossing at Encarnación, near Posadas (see the boxed text, p218), can charge a fine from crossers who don't have a Paraguayan visa (Australian, New Zealand, Canadian and US nationals need them).

Visa Extensions

For a 90-day extension on your tourist visa, visit the **Dirección Nacional de Migraciones** (immigration office; Map pp84-5; ☎ 011-4317-0200; Antártida Argentina 1355; 🕒 7:30am-1:30pm Mon-Fri) in Buenos Aires. You must do so during the week that your tourist visa is scheduled to expire. The fee is AR$300.

Another option if you're staying more than three months is to cross into Colonia or Montevideo (both in Uruguay) or into Chile for a day or two before your visa expires, then return with a new 90-day visa. However, this only works if you don't need a visa to enter the other country.

VOLUNTEERING

There are many opportunities for volunteering in Argentina, from food banks to *villas miserias* to organic farms to working with monkeys. Most Argentine NGOs provide volunteer opportunities for travelers, sometimes in the form of internships that can go toward tertiary degree credits.

Argentine organizations:

Conservación Patagonica (www.patagonialandtrust.org/volunteer.htm) Help to create a national park.
Eco Yoga Park One-of-a-kind; see the boxed text (p104).
Fundación Banco de Alimentos (www.bancodealimentos.org.ar) Short-term, simple work at a food bank.
Parque Nacional Los Glaciares (☎ 02962-430004) Summer work with park rangers in El Chaltén. Spanish language skills preferred.
Refugio del Caraya (www.volunteer-with-howler-monkeys.org)

Referral services:

Anda Responsible Travel (www.andatravel.com.ar)
Buenos Aires Volunteer (www.bavolunteer.org.ar)
Foundation for Sustainable Development (www.fsdinternational.org)
Fundación Fos (www.fundacionfos.org.ar) Volunteer in Córdoba.
La Montaña (www.lamontana.com/volunteer-work) Volunteer in Bariloche.
Organic Volunteers (www.organicvolunteers.org) Organic farming in Argentina.
Patagonia Volunteer (www.patagoniavolunteer.org) Opportunities in Patagonia.
South American Explorers (www.saexplorers.org/clubhouses/buenosaires)
Volunteer South America (www.volunteersouthamerica.net) List of NGOs.
WWOOF Argentina (www.wwoofargentina.com) Organic farming in Argentina.
Voluntario Global (www.voluntarioglobal.org.ar) Community volunteering.

WOMEN TRAVELERS

Being a woman traveling in Argentina is a challenge, especially if you are young, going it alone and/or maintaining an inflexibly liberal attitude. In some ways Argentina is a safer place for a woman than Europe, the USA and most other Latin American countries, but dealing with its machismo culture can be a real pain in the ass.

Some males brimming with testosterone feel the need to comment on a woman's attractiveness. This often happens when the woman is alone and walking by on the street; it occasionally happens to two or more women walking together, but never to a heterosexual couple. Verbal comments include crude language, hisses, whistles and *piropos* (flirtatious comments), which many Argentine males consider an art of complimenting a woman. *Piropos* are often vulgar, although some can be creative and even eloquent. Much as you may want to give them a kick where it counts, the best thing to do is completely ignore the comments. After all, many *porteñas* (women from Buenos Aires) do enjoy getting these 'compliments' and most men don't necessarily mean to be insulting; they're just doing what males in their culture are brought up to do.

Images of attractive woman are very often used for advertising – even for the most non-sexual product (like health care). This can get old quick, but those who make a conscious effort to not let it bother them are least affected.

On the plus side of machismo, expect men to hold a door open for you and always let you enter first, including getting on buses; this gives you a better chance at grabbing an empty seat, so get in there quick.

WORK

Argentina is short on jobs – many locals are unemployed or underemployed – and unskilled foreign travelers shouldn't expect to find much work other than teaching English (or perhaps working at an expat bar). Working out of an institute, native English speakers (certified or not) can earn about AR$20 to AR$30 per hour. When planning, you should take into account slow periods such as January and February, when many locals leave town on vacation. Most teachers work 'illegally,' heading over to Uruguay every three months for a new visa.

For job postings, check out www.craigslist.com and the classifieds in the English-language newspapers *Buenos Aires Herald* (www.buenosairesherald.com) or the *Argentimes* (www.theargentimes.com). You could also try posting on expat website forums such as www.baexpats.org.

Transportation

CONTENTS

GETTING THERE & AWAY	**613**
Entering the Country	613
Air	613
Land	615
River	616
Sea	616
GETTING AROUND	**616**
Air	616
Bicycle	617
Boat	617
Bus	618
Car & Motorcycle	619
Hitchhiking	620
Local Transportation	621
Train	621

GETTING THERE & AWAY

ENTERING THE COUNTRY

Entering Argentina is straightforward; immigration officials at airports are generally quick to the point and waste few words, while those at border crossings may take a little more time scrutinizing your passport before stamping it. Anyone entering the country is required to have a valid passport. Once you're in the country, police can still demand identification at any moment. It's a good idea to carry at least a photocopy of your passport around town at all times. For information on visa requirements, see p611.

When entering by air, you officially must have a return ticket, though this is rarely asked for once you're in Argentina. However, it is commonly asked for by the airline in the country of origin. Most airlines prohibit the boarding of any passengers without proof of onward travel, regardless of whether the person was sold a one-way ticket or not. They do this because the airline is responsible for flying you back home should you be denied entrance (which is highly unlikely) once you're in Argentina. For those planning to travel indefinitely, the only way out of this predicament is to buy a cheap, *fully refundable* onward flight (say, Mendoza to Santiago, Chile) and either use it or get the refund once you're in Argentina. The refund, however, can take months to process.

AIR

Argentina has direct flights between countries including North America, the UK, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Italy, Spain and South Africa, and from all South American countries except the Guianas. Alternatively, you can fly to a neighboring country, such as Chile or Brazil, and continue overland to Argentina.

Airports & Airlines

Aerolíneas Argentinas, the national carrier, enjoys a good reputation for its international flights (although its domestic flights are prone to delay; see p616). Except for flights from Santiago, Chile to Mendoza or Córdoba, nearly all international flights arrive at Buenos Aires' **Aeropuerto Internacional Ministro Pistarini** (Ezeiza; ☎ 011-5480-6111, tourist information 011-4480-0224), which is about a 40-minute bus or taxi ride out of town. For information on how to get into town from Ezeiza, see p134.

Airports in several provincial capitals and tourist destinations are earmarked as 'international': this usually means they receive flights from neighboring countries. Basic information on most Argentine airports can be found online at **Aeropuertos Argentina 2000** (www.aa2000.com.ar).

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

Airports in Argentina include (but are not limited to) the following:
Bariloche (airport code BRC; ☎ 02944-405016)
Córdoba (COR; ☎ 0351-475-0871)
El Calafate (ECA; ☎ 02902-491-220)
Jujuy (JUJ; ☎ 0388-491-1103)
Mendoza (MDZ; ☎ 0261-520-6000)
Puerto Iguazú (IGR; ☎ 03757-421996)
Río Gallegos (RGL; ☎ 02966-442340)
Rosario (ROS; ☎ 0341-451-2997)
Salta (SLA; ☎ 0387-424-3115)
San Juan (UAQ; ☎ 0264-425-4133)
Tucumán (TUC; ☎ 0381-426-5072)
Ushuaia (USH; ☎ 0291-431232)

AIRLINES FLYING TO & FROM ARGENTINA

The following airlines fly to and from Argentina and are listed here with their telephone numbers in Argentina; all numbers that aren't toll-free are Buenos Aires numbers.
Aerolíneas Argentinas (airline code ARG; ☎ 0810-222-86527; www.aerolineas.com)
AeroSur (ASU; ☎ 011-4516-0999; www.aerosur.com)
Air Canada (ACA; ☎ 011-4327-3640; www.aircanada.ca)
Air France (AFR; ☎ 011-4317-4700; www.airfrance.com)
Alitalia (AZA; ☎ 0810-777-2548; www.alitalia.com)
American Airlines (AAL; ☎ 011-4318-1111; www.aa.com)
Avianca (AVA; ☎ 011-4322-2731; www.avianca.com)
British Airways (BA; ☎ 011-4320-6600; www.britishairways.com)
Continental (COA; ☎ 0800-333-0425; www.continental.com)
Copa (CMP; ☎ 0810-222-2672; www.copaair.com)
Delta (DAL; ☎ 0800-666-0133; www.delta.com)
Gol (GLO; ☎ 0810-266-3232; www.voegol.com.br)
KLM (KLM; ☎ 011-4317-4711; www.klm.com)
LAN (LAN; ☎ 0800-999-9526; www.lan.com)
Líneas Aéreas del Estado (LADE) (LDE; ☎ 0810-810-5233; www.lade.com.ar)
Lufthansa (DLH; ☎ 011-4319-0600; www.lufthansa.com)
Pluna (PUA; ☎ 011-4120-0530; www.pluna.com.uy)
Qantas Airways (QFA; ☎ 011-4114-5800; www.qantas.com)
TACA (TAI; ☎ 0810-333-8222; www.taca.com)
Transportes Aéreos de Mercosur (TAM; ☎ 0810-333-3333; www.tam.com.py)
United Airlines (UAL; ☎ 0810-777-8648; www.united.com.ar)

Tickets

From almost everywhere, South America is a relatively costly destination, but discount fares can reduce the bite considerably. Contacting a travel agency that specializes in Latin American destinations often turns up the best deals.

INTERCONTINENTAL (RTW) TICKETS

Some of the best deals for travelers visiting many countries on different continents are Round-the-World (RTW) tickets. Itineraries from the USA, Europe or Australia usually include five or six stopovers (including Buenos Aires). Similar 'Circle Pacific' fares allow excursions between Australasia and South America. These types of tickets are certain to have restrictions, so check the fine print carefully. For an idea of the varying fares and itinerary policies for both types of tickets, check out the following websites:
Air Brokers International (www.airbrokers.com) US based.
Airtreks (www.airtreks.com) US based.
Round the World Flights (www.roundtheworldflights.com) UK based.

Australia & New Zealand

Qantas flies from Auckland to Buenos Aires via Sydney. Aerolíneas Argentinas has direct flights to Buenos Aires from both Sydney and Auckland. Nondirect flights go via the USA or Santiago, Chile.

RECIPROCITY FEE & DEPARTURE TAXES

As of January 2010, citizens from some countries have to pay a 'reciprocity fee' *(tasa de reciprocidad)* when they land in Ezeiza. This is equal to what Argentines are charged for visas to visit those countries. These fees are US$131 for Americans, US$70 for Canadians and US$100 for Australians. The fee is payable in cash, credit card or traveler's check and is usually good for 10 years (per entry for Canadians, though – sucks, eh?). It's currently charged at Ezeiza only, but in the future will be collected at all immigration checkpoints.

When leaving Ezeiza on an international flight, passengers have to pay a departure tax. Tickets bought after March 2009, however, should have this tax included in the ticket price.

The main domestic airports that charge a departure tax are Trelew (AR$18), El Calafate (AR$38) and Ushuaia (AR$25).

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor travel generates carbon dioxide (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow jetsetters to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: lonelyplanet.com.

Canada

Air Canada flies direct from Toronto to Buenos Aires. Booking flights with connections through a US carrier (such as American Airlines and Continental via Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami or New York) may offer more flexibility.

Europe

Direct services from London (and other cities) to Buenos Aires are available with Aerolíneas Argentinas and several other airlines. **Journey Latin America** (☎ 020-8747 3108; www.journeylatinamerica.co.uk) specializes in travel to Latin America and is a good place to start your inquiries.

Direct flights from Europe to Buenos Aires include Paris (with Air France), Madrid (Iberia and Aerolíneas Argentinas), Rome (Aerolíneas Argentinas) and Frankfurt (Lufthansa). Nondirect flights go via Sao Paolo, Brazil, or Santiago, Chile.

USA

The principal gateways are Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami and New York. Aerolíneas Argentinas, American Airlines, Continental, Delta and United fly to Buenos Aires. Latin American travel specialist **eXito Travel** (☎ in US 800-655-4053; www.exitotravel.com) offers some of the cheapest fares around, as well as personal service from an impressively well-informed staff.

LAND

Border Crossings

There are numerous border crossings from neighboring Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay; the following lists are only the principal crossings. Generally, border formalities are straightforward as long as all your documents are in order. For info on necessary visas and documents, see p611.

BOLIVIA

La Quiaca to Villazón Many buses go from Jujuy and Salta to La Quiaca, where you must walk or take a taxi across the Bolivian border.

Aguas Blancas to Bermejo From Orán, reached by bus from Salta or Jujuy, take a bus to Aguas Blancas and then Bermejo, where you can catch a bus to Tarija.

Pocitos to Yacuiba Buses from Jujuy or Salta go to Tartagal and then on to the Bolivian border at Pocitos/Yacuiba, where there are buses to Santa Cruz.

BRAZIL

The most common crossing is from Puerto Iguazú (p226) to Foz do Iguaçu (p230). Check both cities for more information on the peculiarities of this border crossing, especially

if you're crossing the border into Brazil only to see the other side of Iguazú Falls. For specifics, see the boxed text on p225. There are also border crossings from Paso de los Libres (Argentina; p212) to Uruguaiana (Brazil) to São Borja (Brazil).

CHILE

There are numerous crossings between Argentina and Chile. Except in far southern Patagonia, every land crossing involves crossing the Andes. Due to weather, some high-altitude passes close in winter; even the busy Mendoza–Santiago route over RN 7 can close for several days (sometimes longer) during a severe storm. Always check road conditions, especially if you have a flight scheduled on the other side of the mountains. The following are the most commonly used crossings:

Bariloche to Puerto Montt The famous, scenic 12-hour bus-boat combination runs over the Andes to Chile. It takes two days in winter. See the boxed text, p409.

El Calafate to Puerto Natales and Parque Nacional Torres del Paine Probably the most beaten route down here, heading from the Glaciar Perito Moreno (near El Calafate) to Parque Nacional Torres del Paine (near Puerto Natales). Several buses per day in summer; one to two daily in the off-season.

Los Antiguos to Chile Chico Those entering from Chile can access the rugged RN 40 from here and head down to El Chaltén and El Calafate. Best in summer, when there's actually public transport available.

Mendoza to Santiago The most popular crossing between the two countries, passing 6962m Aconcagua en route.

Salta to San Pedro de Atacama (via Purmamarca) Twelve-hour bus ride through the altiplano with stunningly beautiful scenery.

Ushuaia to Punta Arenas Daily buses in summer, fewer in winter, on this 12- to 18-hour trip (depending on weather conditions), which includes a ferry crossing at either Porvenir or Punta Delgada/Primera Angostura.

URUGUAY & PARAGUAY

There are two direct border crossings between Argentina and Paraguay: Clorinda (p240) to Asunción, and Posadas (p214) to Encarnación. From Puerto Iguazú, Argentina, you can also cross through Brazil into Ciudad del Este, Paraguay.

Border crossings from Argentine cities to Uruguayan cities include Gualeguaychú (p203) to Fray Bentos; Colón (p207) to Paysandú; and Concordia (p210) to Salto. All involve crossing bridges. Buses from Buenos Aires to Montevideo and other waterfront cities, however, are slower and less convenient than the ferries (or ferry–bus combinations) across the Río de la Plata (see below). The crossing at Gualeguaychú is still closed due to conflict surrounding the construction of the Botnia pulp mill on the Uruguayan side of the river. For more information, see the boxed text, p536.

Bus

Travelers can bus to Argentina from most bordering countries. Buses are usually comfortable, modern and fairly clean. Crossing over does not involve too many hassles; just make sure that you have any proper visas (p611) beforehand.

RIVER

There are several river crossings between Uruguay and Buenos Aires that involve ferry or hydrofoil, and often require combinations with buses.

Buenos Aires to Colonia Daily ferries (one to three hours) head to Colonia, with bus connections to Montevideo (additional three hours). See p560.

Buenos Aires to Montevideo High-speed ferries carry passengers from downtown Buenos Aires to the Uruguayan capital in only 2¾ hours. See p554.

Tigre to Carmelo Regular passenger launches speed from the Buenos Aires suburb of Tigre to Carmelo in 2½ hours (services also go to Montevideo from Tigre). See p562.

SEA

Arriving in Argentina by sea is uncommon indeed, although Chilean company **Navimag** (www.navimag.com) operates the famous ferry from Puerto Montt, Chile (near Bariloche), down the length of Chilean Patagonia to Puerto Natales, Chile, near Parque Nacional Torres del Paine (due west of Río Gallegos).

GETTING AROUND

AIR

Airlines in Argentina

The national carrier, **Aerolíneas Argentinas/Austral** (☎ 0810-222-86527; www.aerolineas.com), offers the most domestic flights, but it's not necessarily better than its competitors. In fact, the airline had a very bad reputation for delays in the past (though most recently it's improved).

Other airlines with domestic flights include **LAN** (LAN; ☎ 0800-999-9526; www.lan.com) and **Líneas Aéreas del Estado** (LADE; ☎ 0810-810-5233; www.lade.com.ar), the air force's passenger service. The latter has some of the least expensive air tickets (probably because its offices still have the same decor it did in 1974) and specializes in Patagonia; the airline has very few flights, however.

Most domestic airlines operate on a two-tier system, where foreigners pay more than locals for the same ticket. One way to avoid the higher fee Aerolíneas Argentinas charges foreigners is by taking advantage of the discounted airfares the airline offers to those who fly to Argentina with Aerolíneas. However, you must purchase these tickets from outside Argentina, usually at the time of purchasing your international flight. The promotion is most convenient for travelers who can set their schedule prior to visiting the country.

Nearly all domestic flights (except for LADE's hops around Patagonia) have connections only through **Aeroparque Jorge Newbery** (☎ 011-5480-6111; www.aa2000.com.ar), a short distance north of downtown Buenos Aires. Flying with certain airlines on certain flights can be financially comparable or even cheaper than covering the same distance by bus, but demand is heavy and flights, especially to Patagonian destinations during summer, are often booked out well in advance.

BICYCLE

If you dig cycling your way around a country, Argentina has some good potential. It will also save you some money: partnered with camping, cycling can cut the costs of your trip significantly. And of course you'll see the landscape in greater detail, you'll have far more freedom than you would if beholden to public transportation, and you'll likely meet more locals.

Road bikes are suitable for many paved roads, but byways are often narrow and surfaces can be rough. A *todo terreno* (mountain bike) is often safer and more convenient, allowing you to use the unpaved shoulder and the very extensive network of gravel roads throughout the country. Argentine bicycles are improving in quality, but are still far from equal to their counterparts in Europe or the USA.

There are two major drawbacks to long-distance bicycling in Argentina. One is the wind, which in Patagonia can slow your progress to a crawl. The other is Argentine motorists: on many of the country's straight, narrow, two-lane highways, they can be a serious hazard to cyclists. Make yourself as visible as possible, and wear a helmet.

Bring an adequate repair kit and extra parts (and the know-how to use them) and stock up on good maps (see p604), which is usually easier to do once you're in Argentina (there are plenty of places to get good maps in Buenos Aires). Even if you have 10 maps for a region, always confirm directions and inquire about conditions locally; maps can be unreliable and conditions change regularly. In Patagonia, a windbreaker and warm clothing are essential. Don't expect much traffic on some back roads.

For ideas on where you might want to ride, see p58.

Rental

Reasonable bicycle rentals (mostly mountain bikes) are available in many popular tourist destinations, such as along the Atlantic Coast, Mendoza, Bariloche and other towns throughout the Lake District and Córdoba's Central Sierras. Prices are by the hour or day, and are affordable.

Purchase

Many towns have bike shops, but high-quality bikes are expensive, and repair parts can be hard to come by. If you do decide to buy while you're here, you're best off doing so in Buenos Aires. Selection in other major cities – even Córdoba and Mendoza – is pretty slim, and prices for an imported bike (which you'll want if you're doing serious cycling) are much higher than in their country of origin. If you're staying for a while and you just need a bike for tooling around the city, you'll find Argentine bikes are good value. You can pick up a beach cruiser for under AR$600, and a multispeed townie for around AR$800.

BOAT

Opportunities for boat or river travel in and around Argentina are limited, though there are regular international services to/from Uruguay (see opposite) and to/from Chile via the Lake District (see p408). The classic sea

route south along the Patagonian Andes is the Navimag boat trip (see p616); although the journey is in Chile, many people combine the trip with a visit to Argentina. Further south, from Ushuaia, operators offer boat trips on the Beagle Channel in Tierra del Fuego; see p521.

Otherwise, if you must be on the water, head to the Buenos Aires suburb of Tigre (p137), where there are numerous boat excursions around the delta of the Río de la Plata.

BUS

If you're doing any serious traveling around Argentina, you'll become very familiar with the country's excellent bus network, which reaches almost everywhere. Buses are fast, surprisingly comfortable and can be a rather luxurious experience. It's the way most Argentines get around. Larger luggage is stowed in the hold below, security is generally good (especially on the 1st-class buses) and attendants tag your bags (and should be tipped). If you have a long way to go – say, Buenos Aires to Mendoza – overnight buses are the way to go, saving you a night's accommodations and the daylight hours for fun.

Hundreds of bus companies serve different regions but a few bigger lines (listed here) really dominate the long-haul business:

Andesmar (☎ 0261-429-5095, 011-6385-3031; www.andesmar.com) Serves the entire country.

Chevallier (☎ 011-4000-5255; www.nuevachevallier.com) Serves the entire country.

El Rápido International (☎ 0261-405-4344; www.elrapidoint.com.ar) Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Córdoba and Rosario. International service to Santiago and Viña del Mar (Chile) and Lima (Peru).

Via Bariloche (☎ 0800-333-7575; www.viabariloche.com.ar) Serves most destinations in La Pampa province, the Lake District and Patagonia.

Most cities and towns have a central bus terminal where each company has its own ticket window. Some companies post schedules prominently, and the ticket price and departure time is always on the ticket you buy. Expect (Argentine) restrooms, left luggage, fast-food stalls, kiosks and newspaper vendors inside or near almost every terminal. In larger destination cities they'll often have a tourist information office. There are generally few hotel touts or other traveler-hassling types at terminals; El Calafate is one notable exception.

A nearly comprehensive search engine for bus schedules and prices country-wide is www.plataforma10.com.

Classes

This is where it gets fun. Better bus lines such as Chevallier and Andesmar (not to mention dozens of others) have modern coaches with spacious, cushy seats, large windows, air-conditioning, TVs, toilets (though don't expect luxury here – and bring toilet paper) and sometimes an attendant serving coffee and snacks.

On overnight trips it's well worth the extra pesos to go *coche cama* (sleeper class), though the cheaper *coche semi-cama* (semisleeper) is definitely manageable. In *coche cama,* seats are wider, recline almost flat and are far more comfortable. If you want to lay totally flat, you can go *ejecutivo* (executive) or *coche super cama* (super sleeper), which is available on a few popular runs such as Buenos Aires–Córdoba and Buenos Aires–Rosario. If pinching pesos, *común* (common) is the cheapest class. For trips under about five hours, there's usually no choice and buses are *común* or beat-up *semi-cama,* which are both usually just fine.

Costs

Bus fares vary widely depending on season, class and company. Prices given in the Getting There & Away sections throughout this book are approximate and are mid- to high-season fares, generally in *semi-cama*. Patagonia runs tend to be the most expensive. Many companies accept credit cards. Following are sample fares from Buenos Aires:

Destination	Cost (AR$)
Bariloche	245
Comodoro Rivadavia	308
Córdoba	150
Mar del Plata	90
Mendoza	250
Puerto Iguazú	280
Puerto Madryn	270
Rosario	50

Reservations

Often you don't need to buy bus tickets ahead of time unless you're traveling on a Friday between major cities, when overnight *coche cama* services sell out fast. During holiday stretches, such as late December, January, July and August, tickets sell quickly, so you're best off buying yours ahead of time. As soon as you

arrive somewhere, especially if it's a town with limited services, find out which companies go to your next destination and when, and plan your trip out around that.

When the bus terminal is on the outskirts of a big town or city, there are often downtown agencies selling tickets without commission. Some of these agencies are listed in this book – if not, ask at your hotel or the tourist office.

Seasonal Services

In the Lake District and northern Patagonia, bus services are outstanding during summer (November through March), when there are many microbus routes to campgrounds, along lake circuits, to trail heads and to other destinations popular with tourists. Outside summer, however, these services stop, and getting around becomes much more difficult.

In Patagonia the famed stretch of RN 40, or Ruta Nacional Cuarenta (Route 40), south of Gobernador Costa, is infrequently traveled, rough and has with zero public transport – well, almost. Recently, some businesses have sprung up offering seasonal service (really they're microbus tours) along the route. For more details, see the boxed text, p462.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Because Argentina is so large, many parts are accessible only by private vehicle, despite the country's extensive public transport system. This is especially true in Patagonia, where distances are great and buses can be infrequent. Besides, with your own wheels you can stop for photo ops or bathroom breaks at the side of the road whenever you want.

If you want to rent a motorcycle in Buenos Aires, check out **Motocare** (p136).

Automobile Associations

Whenever driving in Argentina, it's worth being a member (in fact, you may *already* be something of a member) of the **Automóvil Club Argentino** (ACA; Map pp88-9; ☎ 011-4802-6061; www.aca.org.ar, in Spanish; Av del Libertador 1850, Palermo, Buenos Aires), which has offices, gas stations and garages throughout the country, offering **road service** (☎ 0800-888-84253) and towing in and around major destinations. ACA recognizes members of most overseas auto clubs and grants them privileges including road service and discounts on maps and accommodations. Bring your card.

Bring Your Own Vehicle

Chile is probably the best country on the continent for shipping a vehicle from overseas, though Argentina is feasible. Getting the vehicle out of customs typically involves routine but time-consuming paperwork.

Driver's License & Documents

Technically you're supposed to have an International Driving Permit to supplement your national or state driver's license. If you are stopped, police will also inspect your automobile registration and insurance and tax documents, all of which must be up to date. Except in Buenos Aires, security problems are unusual.

Drivers of Argentine vehicles must carry their title document (*tarjeta verde* or 'green card'); if it's a rental, make sure it's in the glove box. For foreign vehicles, customs permission is the acceptable substitute. Liability insurance is obligatory, and police often ask to see proof of insurance at checkpoints.

Fuel

Nafta (gas) costs roughly AR$3.15 to AR$3.60 per liter. Avoid *normal* or *común* (regular) as it's usually low quality and hard to find. Super and *premium* (often called Fangio) are better choices. In Patagonia (where much of Argentina's oil fields are) gas prices are nearly half what they are elsewhere. *Estaciones de servicio* (gas stations) are fairly common (especially YPFs), but outside the cities keep an eye on your gas gauge. In Patagonia it's a good idea to carry extra fuel.

Rental

Renting a car in Argentina is a good option because it allows you the freedom to go and stop wherever you please, and to visit those backcountry places that buses don't. To rent a car, you must be at least 21 years of age and have a valid driver's license and a credit card. To drive you must have an International Driving Permit, but renters rarely ask for this.

The cheapest and smallest vehicles cost about AR$190 per day with 150km to 200km included. Unlimited-kilometer deals do exist but might be more expensive, depending on the destination. A 4WD vehicle is significantly more expensive. One of the cheapest places to rent a car is Bariloche; if you're heading down to Patagonia or plan to drive for a while, this is a good place to rent. Reserving a car

with one of the major international agencies in your home country sometimes gets you lower rates.

Insurance

Liability insurance is obligatory in Argentina, and police ask to see proof of insurance at checkpoints. Fortunately, coverage is reasonably priced. If you plan on taking the car to neighboring countries, make sure it will remain covered (you'll have to pay extra). Among reputable insurers in Argentina are **Mapfre** (☎ 0800-999-7424; www.mapfre.com.ar) and **ACA** (☎ 011-4802-6061; www.aca.org.ar).

Purchase

If you are spending several months in Argentina, purchasing a car is an alternative worth exploring. If you resell the car at the end of your stay, it may turn out even more economical. On the other hand, any used car can be a risk, especially on Patagonia's rugged back roads, and the process of purchasing a car can be a real headache.

If you buy a car, you must deal with the exasperating Argentine bureaucracy. You must have the title *(tarjeta verde),* and license tax payments must be up to date. As a foreigner, you may find it useful to carry a notarized document authorizing your use of the car, since the bureaucracy moves too slowly to change the title easily. Argentines themselves rarely change the title over because of the expense involved.

As a foreigner without a DNI (national document) you may own a vehicle in Argentina; however, you theoretically cannot take it out of the country without a notarized authorization, which can be difficult to obtain.

Road Rules & Hazards

Anyone considering driving in Argentina should know that Argentine drivers are aggressive and commonly ignore speed limits, road signs and even traffic signals. That said, once you're out of the city, driving can be much more pleasant.

Most Argentine highways have a speed limit of 80km/h, and some have been raised to 100km/h or more, but hardly anybody pays attention to these – or any other regulations. During the pampas harvest season, pay particular attention to slow-moving farm machinery: it's not a hazard in its own right, but brings out the worst in impatient Argentine motorists. Night driving is not recommended; in many regions animals hang out on the road for warmth, and plowing into an Argentine cow is not fun.

Have on hand some emergency reflectors *(balizas)* and a 1kg fire extinguisher. Headrests are required for the driver and passengers, and seatbelts are now obligatory (though few wear them). Motorcycle helmets are also obligatory, although this law is rarely enforced.

You won't often see police patrolling the highways, but you will meet them at major intersections and roadside checkpoints where they conduct meticulous document and equipment checks. Equipment violations can carry heavy fines, but such checks are more commonly pretexts for graft. For instance, if the police ask to check your turn signals (which almost no Argentine bothers to use), brake lights or hand brake, it may well be a warning of corruption in progress. The police may claim that you must pay the fine at a local bank, which may not be open until the following day or (if it's on a weekend) until Monday. If you are uncertain about your rights, state in a very matter-of-fact manner your intention to contact your embassy or consulate, or feign such complete ignorance of Spanish that you're more trouble than the police think it's worth. It may be possible to pay the fine on the spot (wink, wink). Ask, *'¿Puedo pagar la multa ahora?'* ('Can I pay the fine now?').

HITCHHIKING

Hitchhiking *(hacer dedo)* is never entirely safe in any country in the world. Travelers who decide to hitch should understand that they are taking a small but potentially serious risk. People who do choose to hitch will be safer if they travel in pairs and let someone know where they are planning to go.

Along with Chile, Argentina is probably the best country for hitching in all of South America. The major drawback is that Argentine vehicles are often stuffed full with families and children, but truckers will frequently pick up backpackers. At the *estaciones de servicio* (gas stations) at the outskirts of large Argentine cities, where truckers gas up their vehicles, it's often easy to solicit a ride.

Women can and do hitchhike alone, but should exercise caution and especially avoid getting into a car with more than one man. In Patagonia, where distances are great and vehicles few, hitchers should expect long waits and carry warm, windproof clothing.

Having a sign will improve your chances for a pickup, especially if it says something like *visitando Argentina de Canada* (visiting Argentina from Canada), rather than just a destination. Argentines are fascinated by foreigners.

There are a few routes along which hitching is undesirable. RN 40, from El Calafate to Perito Moreno and Río Mayo, is one. Up north, the scenic route from Tucumán to Cafayate is difficult past Tafí del Valle. Throughout the Lake District, hitching is common, especially out in the country where locals regularly get around by thumbing it.

For good information (in Spanish) see www.autostopargentina.com.ar.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Bus

Local Argentine buses, called *colectivos,* are notorious for charging down the street, gobbling up coins and spewing clouds of black smoke while traveling at breakneck speeds. Riding on one is a good way to see the cities and get around, providing you can sort out the often complex bus systems. Buses are clearly numbered and usually carry a placard indicating their final destination. Many identically numbered buses serve slightly different routes (especially in big cities), so pay attention to the placards. To ask 'Does this bus go (to the town center)?' say '*¿Va este colectivo (al centro)?*'

Most city buses operate on coins; you pay as you board. In some cities, such as Mendoza, you must buy prepaid bus cards or – in the case of Córdoba – *cospeles* (tokens). In both cases, they can be bought at any kiosk.

Subway

Buenos Aires is the only Argentine city with a subway system (known as the Subte), and it's the quickest way of getting around the city center. For details, see p136.

Taxi & Remise

The people of Buenos Aires (BA) make frequent use of taxis, which are digitally metered and cheap by US and European standards. Outside the capital, meters are common but not universal, and it may be necessary to agree upon a fare in advance. Drivers are generally polite and honest, but there are exceptions: be sure the meter is set at zero and be sure it's on. It is customary to round up the fare as a tip. In Buenos Aires, do not pay with large bills; these can be deftly and quickly switched for a fake, or you may get fake bills in change. For more on taking taxis in BA, see p136.

Where public transportation is scarce, it's possible to hire a taxi with a driver for the day. If you bargain, this can actually be cheaper than a rental car, but always negotiate the fee in advance.

Remises are radio taxis without meters that generally offer fixed fares within a given zone. They are usually cheaper than taxis. They don't cruise the city in search of fares, as taxis do, but hotels and restaurants will phone them for you if you ask.

TRAIN

For many years there were major reductions in long-distance train service in Argentina, but recent years have seen some rail lines being progressively reopened. A good source for information is http://www.seat61.com/SouthAmerica.htm.

Long-distance trains have sleepers. Trains continue serve most of Buenos Aires and some surrounding provinces. Major lines further afield from BA currently in service:

Buenos Aires–Bariloche Via Bahía Blanca, Carmen de Patagones/Viedma. Note that the weekly Bahía Blanca–Carmen de Patagones leg is slow and periodically is cancelled.
Buenos Aires–Córdoba Via San Isidro, Tigre and Rosario.
Buenos Aires–Mar del Plata
Buenos Aires–Pinamar/Tandil
Buenos Aires–Posadas Via Concordia and Paso de los Libres.
Buenos Aires–Tucumán Via San Isidro, Rosario and Córdoba.

During the holiday periods, such as Christmas or national holidays, buy tickets in advance. Train fares tend to be lower than comparable bus fares, but trains are slower and there are fewer departure times and destinations. For details on which station each service departs from in Bunos Aires, see p134.

Train buffs will want to take the narrow-gauge *La Trochita* (see the boxed text, p461), which runs between Esquel and El Maitén. Another legendary ride is Salta's spectacular *Tren a las Nubes* (Train to the Clouds; p270); the service is more regular these days compared to a few years ago. A scenic stretch of track (and luxurious service aboard the *Tren Patagónico*) also connects the Lake District hub of Bariloche (p409) to Viedma (p424), on the Atlantic coast of Patagonia.

Health

Dr David Goldberg

CONTENTS

BEFORE YOU GO	**622**
Insurance	622
Medical Checklist	622
Internet Resources	622
Further Reading	623
IN TRANSIT	**623**
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	623
Jet Lag & Motion Sickness	623
IN ARGENTINA	**624**
Availability & Cost of Health Care	624
Infectious Diseases	624
Traveler's Diarrhea	627
Environmental Hazards	627
Traveling with Children	628
Women's Health	628

Medically speaking, there are two South Americas. Tropical South America covers most of the continent, and includes northern Argentina. Temperate South America takes in southern Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas). The diseases found in tropical South America are comparable to those found in tropical areas in Africa and Asia. Particularly important are mosquito-borne infections, including malaria, yellow fever and dengue fever. These are generally not a significant concern in temperate South America, but in 2009 a dengue fever outbreak reached Buenos Aires (see p624).

Prevention is the key to staying healthy in Argentina. Travelers who receive the recommended vaccines and follow common-sense precautions usually come away with nothing more than a little diarrhea.

BEFORE YOU GO

Bring medication in its original, clearly labeled container. A signed, dated letter from your physician describing your medical conditions and medications, including generic names, is also a good idea. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to have a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity.

INSURANCE

If your health insurance doesn't cover you for medical expenses abroad, consider getting extra insurance. Find out in advance if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later for overseas health expenditures. (In Argentina, doctors expect payment in cash.)

MEDICAL CHECKLIST

- acetaminophen (Tylenol) or aspirin
- adhesive or paper tape
- antibacterial ointment (eg Bactroban; for cuts and abrasions)
- antibiotics
- antidiarrheal drugs (eg loperamide)
- antihistamines (for hay fever and allergic reactions)
- anti-inflammatory drugs (eg ibuprofen)
- bandages, gauze, gauze rolls
- DEET-containing insect repellent for the skin
- iodine tablets (for water purification)
- oral rehydration salts
- permethrin-containing insect spray for clothing, tents and bed nets
- pocket knife
- scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- steroid cream or cortisone (for poison ivy and other allergic rashes)
- sunblock
- syringes and sterile needles
- thermometer

INTERNET RESOURCES

There is a wealth of travel health advice on the internet. For further info, the **Lonely Planet website** (www.lonelyplanet.com) is a good place to start. The **World Health Organization** (www.who.int/ith) publishes a superb book called *International Travel and Health,* which is revised annually and is available online at no cost. Another website of general interest is **MD Travel Health** (www.mdtravelhealth.com), which provides complete travel-health recommendations for every country and is updated daily.

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

Since most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, visit a physician four to eight weeks before departure. No vaccines are required for Argentina, but a number are recommended.

Vaccine	Recommended for	Dosage	Side effects
chickenpox	travelers who've never had chickenpox	2 doses 1 month apart	fever; mild case of chickenpox
hepatitis A	all travelers	1 dose before trip; booster 6-12 months later	soreness at injection site; headaches; body aches
hepatitis B	long-term travelers in close contact with the local population	3 doses over 6-month period	soreness at injection site; low-grade fever
measles	travelers who have never had measles or completed a vaccination course	1 dose	fever; rash; joint pains; allergic reactions
rabies	travelers who may have contact with animals and may not have access to medical care	3 doses over 3-4 week period	soreness at injection site; headaches; body aches
tetanus	all travelers who haven't had booster within 10 years	1 dose lasts 10 years	soreness at injection site
typhoid	all travelers	4 capsules by mouth, 1 taken every other day	abdominal pain; nausea; rash
yellow fever	travelers to the northeastern forest areas	1 dose lasts 10 years	headaches; body aches; severe reactions are rare

It's usually a good idea to consult your government's travel health website before departure, if one is available:

Australia (www.smartraveller.gov.au)
Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/index.html)
UK (www.nhs.uk/livewell) Click on Travel Health in the drop-down menu.
USA (www.cdc.gov/travel)

FURTHER READING

For further information, see Lonely Planet's *Healthy Travel Central & South America*. If you're traveling with children, Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* may be useful. The *ABC of Healthy Travel,* by E Walker et al, is another valuable resource.

IN TRANSIT

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Blood clots may form in the legs (deep vein thrombosis or DVT) during plane flights, chiefly because of prolonged immobility. The longer the flight, the greater the risk. Though most blood clots are reabsorbed uneventfully, some may break off and travel through the blood vessels to the lungs, where they could cause life-threatening complications.

The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain of the foot, ankle or calf, usually – but not always – on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and difficulty breathing. Travelers with any of these symptoms should immediately seek medical attention.

To prevent the development of DVT on long flights, you should walk about the cabin, perform isometric contractions of the leg muscles (ie flex the leg muscles while sitting), drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol and tobacco.

JET LAG & MOTION SICKNESS

Jet lag is common when crossing more than five time zones, resulting in insomnia, fatigue, malaise or nausea. To avoid jet lag try drinking plenty of (nonalcoholic) fluids and eating light meals. Upon arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep etc) as soon as possible.

Antihistamines such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) and meclizine (Antivert, Bonine) are usually the first choice for treating motion sickness. Their main side effect is drowsiness. An herbal alternative is ginger, which works like a charm for some people.

IN ARGENTINA

AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

Good medical care is available in Buenos Aires (see p93), but may be variable elsewhere, especially in rural areas. Most doctors and hospitals expect payment in cash, regardless of whether you have travel health insurance.

If you develop a life-threatening medical problem, you'll probably want to be evacuated to a country with state-of-the-art medical care. (For an ambulance, call ☎ 107.) Since this may cost thousands of dollars, be sure you have insurance to cover this before you depart.

You can also try contacting your embassy for recommended medical services. Most pharmacies in Argentina are well supplied. Many medications that require a prescription in the USA and Canada are available over the counter, though they may be relatively expensive. If you're taking any medication on a regular basis, be sure you know its generic (scientific) name, since many pharmaceuticals go under different names in Argentina.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a viral infection found throughout South America. It is transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, which prefer to bite during the daytime and are usually found close to human habitations (often indoors). They breed primarily in artificial water containers, such as jars, barrels, cans, cisterns, metal drums, plastic containers and discarded tires. As a result, dengue is especially common in densely populated, urban environments.

In 2009, several thousand cases of dengue were reported in the northern provinces of Argentina, with Chaco and Catamarca being hit the worst. There were even a few dozen cases in Buenos Aires. Fortunately, relatively few deaths resulted. Dengue usually causes flulike symptoms, including fever, muscle aches, joint pains, headaches, nausea and vomiting, often followed by a rash. The body aches may be quite uncomfortable, but most cases resolve uneventfully in a few days. Severe cases usually occur in children under the age of 15 who are experiencing their second dengue infection.

There is no treatment for dengue fever except to take analgesics such as acetaminophen/paracetamol (Tylenol) and drink plenty of fluids. Severe cases may require hospitalization for intravenous fluids and supportive care. There is no vaccine. The cornerstone of prevention is insect protection measures (see p628).

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is the second-most-common travel-related infection (after traveler's diarrhea). It's a viral infection of the liver that is usually acquired by ingestion of contaminated water, food or ice, though it may also be acquired by direct contact with infected persons. The illness occurs throughout the world, but the incidence is higher in developing nations. Symptoms may include fever, malaise, jaundice, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Most cases resolve without complications, though hepatitis A occasionally causes severe liver damage. There is no treatment.

The vaccine for hepatitis A is extremely safe and highly effective. If you get a booster six to 12 months later, it lasts for at least 10 years. You really should get it before you go to Argentina. The safety of the hepatitis A vaccine has not been established for pregnant women or children under two years; instead, they should be given a gammaglobulin injection.

Hepatitis B

Like hepatitis A, hepatitis B is a liver infection that occurs worldwide but is more common in developing nations. Unlike hepatitis A, the disease is usually acquired by sexual contact or by exposure to infected blood, generally through blood transfusions or contaminated needles. The vaccine is recommended only for long-term travelers (on the road more than six months) who expect to live in rural areas or have close physical contact with the local population. Additionally, the vaccine is recommended for anyone who anticipates sexual contact with the local inhabitants or a possible need for medical, dental or other treatments while abroad, especially if a need for transfusions or injections is expected.

The hepatitis B vaccine is safe and highly effective. However, a total of three injections are necessary to establish full immunity. Several countries added the hepatitis B vaccine to the list of routine childhood immunizations in the 1980s, so many young adults are already protected.

A SWINE OF A FLU

The H1N1 virus (commonly referred to as 'Swine Flu') was given a 'Phase 6' rating by the World Health Organization in June 2009. A 'Phase 6' alert means the virus is considered a global pandemic. Like most countries, Argentina was affected. From June to August 2009 (the country's winter) the virus was a serious issue, but the number of cases fell dramatically after the flu season was over.

At the time of research, airport staff in some countries were screening arriving passengers for symptoms of the H1N1 flu. Check with the embassy of the country you're visiting to see if they have imposed any travel restrictions. It's best not to travel if you have flu-like symptoms of any sort.

For the latest information, check with the World Health Organization (www.who.int).

Malaria

Malaria occurs in Argentina, but not the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas). It's transmitted by mosquito bites, usually between dusk and dawn. The main symptom is high spiking fevers, which may be accompanied by chills, sweats, headache, body aches, weakness, vomiting or diarrhea. Severe cases may involve the central nervous system and lead to seizures, confusion, coma and death.

For Argentina, taking malaria pills is strongly recommended for travel to rural areas along the borders with Bolivia (lowlands of Salta and Jujuy provinces) and Paraguay (lowlands of Misiones and Corrientes provinces). There is a choice of three malaria pills, all of which work about equally well. Mefloquine (Lariam) is taken once weekly in a dosage of 250mg, starting one to two weeks before arrival and continuing through the trip and for four weeks after return. The problem is that a certain percentage of people (the number is controversial) develop neuropsychiatric side effects, which may range from mild to severe. Atovaquone/proguanil (Malarone) is a newly approved combination pill taken once daily with food starting two days before arrival and continuing through the trip and for seven days after departure. Side effects are typically mild. Doxycycline is a third alternative, but may cause an exaggerated sunburn reaction.

In general, Malarone seems to cause fewer side effects than mefloquine and is becoming more popular. The chief disadvantage is that it has to be taken daily. For longer trips, it's probably worth trying mefloquine; for shorter trips, Malarone will be the drug of choice for most people.

Protecting yourself against mosquito bites is just as important as taking malaria pills (for recommendations, see p628), since none of the pills are 100% effective.

If you do not have access to medical care while traveling, you should bring along additional pills for emergency self-treatment, which you should take if you can't reach a doctor quickly and you develop symptoms that suggest malaria, such as high spiking fevers. One option is to take four tablets of Malarone once daily for three days. However, Malarone should not be used for treatment if you're already taking it for prevention. An alternative is to take 650mg of quinine three times daily and 100mg doxycycline twice daily for one week. If you start self-medication, see a doctor at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you develop a fever after returning home, see a physician, as malaria symptoms may not occur for months.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral infection of the brain and spinal cord that is almost always fatal. The rabies virus is carried in the saliva of infected animals and is typically transmitted through an animal bite, though contamination of any break in the skin with infected saliva may result in rabies. Rabies occurs in all South American countries.

The rabies vaccine is safe, but a full series requires three injections and is quite expensive. Those at high risk for rabies, such as animal handlers and spelunkers (cave explorers), should certainly get the vaccine. In addition, those at lower risk for animal bites should consider asking for the vaccine if they might be traveling to remote areas and might not have access to appropriate medical care if needed. The treatment for a possibly rabid bite consists of the rabies vaccine with rabies immune globulin. It's effective, but must be given promptly. Most travelers don't need rabies vaccine.

All animal bites and scratches must be promptly and thoroughly cleansed with large amounts of soap and water, and local health authorities contacted to determine whether or not further treatment is necessary. Also see Animal Bites, opposite.

Typhoid Fever

Typhoid fever is caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated by a species of salmonella known as *Salmonella typhi*. Fever occurs in virtually all cases. Other symptoms may include headache, malaise, muscle aches, dizziness, loss of appetite, nausea and abdominal pain. Either diarrhea or constipation may occur. Possible complications include intestinal perforation, intestinal bleeding, confusion, delirium or (rarely) coma.

Unless you expect to take all your meals in major hotels and restaurants, a typhoid vaccine is a good idea. It's usually given orally, but is also available as an injection. Neither vaccine is approved for use in children under two years.

The drug of choice for typhoid fever is usually a quinolone antibiotic such as ciprofloxacin (Cipro) or levofloxacin (Levaquin), which many travelers carry for treatment of traveler's diarrhea. However, if you self-treat for typhoid fever, you may also need to self-treat for malaria, since the symptoms of the two diseases may be indistinguishable.

Yellow Fever

Yellow fever is a life-threatening viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes in forested areas. The illness begins with flu-like symptoms, which may include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, backache, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting. These symptoms usually subside in a few days, but one person in six enters a second, toxic phase characterized by recurrent fever, vomiting, listlessness, jaundice, kidney failure and hemorrhage, leading to death in up to half of the cases. There is no treatment except for supportive care.

The yellow fever vaccine is strongly recommended for all travelers greater than nine months of age who visit the northeastern forest areas near the border with Brazil and Paraguay. For an up-to-date map showing the distribution of yellow fever in Argentina, go to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases /maps /yellowfever_map2.htm.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Some common traditional remedies:

problem	treatment
altitude sickness	gingko
jet lag	melatonin
mosquito-bite prevention	eucalyptus oil; soybean oil
motion sickness	ginger

The yellow fever vaccine is given only in approved yellow fever vaccination centers, which provide validated International Certificates of Vaccination (yellow booklets). The vaccine should be given at least 10 days before any potential exposure to yellow fever and remains effective for approximately 10 years. Reactions to the vaccine are generally mild and may include headaches, muscle aches, low-grade fevers or discomfort at the injection site. Severe, life-threatening reactions have been described but are extremely rare. In general, the risk of becoming ill from the vaccine is far less than the risk of becoming ill from yellow fever, and you're strongly encouraged to get the vaccine.

Taking measures to protect yourself from mosquito bites (p628) is an essential part of preventing yellow fever.

Other Infections

Argentine hemorrhagic fever occurs in the pampas, chiefly from March through October. The disease is acquired by inhalation of dust contaminated with rodent excreta or by direct rodent contact.

Brucellosis is an infection of domestic and wild animals that may be transmitted to humans through direct animal contact or by consumption of unpasteurized dairy products from infected animals. Symptoms may include fever, malaise, depression, loss of appetite, headache, muscle aches and back pain. Complications may include arthritis, hepatitis, meningitis and endocarditis (heart-valve infection).

Chagas' disease is a parasitic infection that is transmitted by triatomine insects (reduviid bugs, which look like long-legged beetles), which inhabit crevices in the walls and roofs of substandard housing in South and Central America. In Argentina, Chagas' disease occurs north of latitude 44° 45'. Transmission is greatest during late spring (November and December). The triatomine insect lays its feces

on human skin as it bites, usually at night. A person becomes infected when he or she unknowingly rubs the feces into the bite wound or any other open sore. Chagas' disease is extremely rare in travelers. However, if you sleep in a poorly constructed house, especially one made of mud, adobe or thatch, you should be sure to protect yourself with a bed net and a good insecticide.

Cholera is extremely rare in Argentina. A cholera vaccine is not recommended.

Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome is a rapidly progressive, life-threatening infection acquired through exposure to the excretions of wild rodents. Most cases occur in those who live in rodent-infested dwellings in rural areas. In Argentina, hantavirus infections are reported from the north-central and southwestern parts of the country.

HIV/AIDS has been reported from all South American countries. Be sure to use condoms for all sexual encounters.

Leishmaniasis occurs in the mountains and jungles of most South American countries. The infection is transmitted by sandflies, which are about one-third the size of mosquitoes. In Argentina, most cases occur in the northeastern part of the country and are limited to the skin, causing slowly growing ulcers over exposed parts of the body. A more severe type of Leishmaniasis disseminates to the bone marrow, liver and spleen. The disease may be particularly severe in those with HIV. There is no vaccine. To protect yourself from sandflies, follow the same precautions as for mosquitoes (see p628), except that netting must be finer mesh (at least 18 holes per 2.54cm or to the linear inch).

Louse-borne typhus occurs in mountain areas, and **murine typhus**, which is transmitted by rat fleas, occurs in warmer rural and jungle areas in the north.

Tick-borne relapsing fever, which may be transmitted by either ticks or lice, is caused by bacteria that are closely related to those which cause Lyme disease and syphilis. In Argentina, tick-borne relapsing fever occurs in the northern part of the country. The illness is characterized by periods of fever, chills, headaches, body aches, muscle aches and cough, alternating with periods when the fever subsides and the person feels relatively well. To minimize the risk of relapsing fever, follow tick precautions (see p628) and practice good personal hygiene at all times.

TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA

Tap water in Argentine cities and towns is generally safe to drink, but ask a local to be sure. If you have doubts, avoiding tap water unless it has been boiled, filtered or chemically disinfected (with iodine) will help to prevent diarrhea.

Only eat fresh fruits or vegetables if they're cooked or peeled. Also be wary of dairy products that might contain unpasteurized milk, and be highly selective when eating food from street vendors.

If you develop diarrhea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably an oral rehydration solution containing lots of salt and sugar. A few loose stools don't require treatment, but if you start having more than four or five stools a day, you should start taking an antibiotic (usually a quinolone drug) and an antidiarrheal agent (such as loperamide).

If diarrhea is bloody, persists for more than 72 hours or is accompanied by fever, shaking chills or severe abdominal pain, you should seek medical attention.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Animal Bites

Do not attempt to pet, handle or feed any animal, with the exception of domestic animals known to be free of any infectious disease. Most animal injuries are directly related to a person's attempt to touch or feed the animal.

Any bite or scratch by a mammal, including bats, should be promptly and thoroughly cleansed with large amounts of soap and water, followed by application of an antiseptic such as iodine or alcohol. The local health authorities should be contacted immediately for possible post-exposure rabies treatment, whether or not you've been immunized against rabies. It may also be advisable to start an antibiotic, since wounds caused by animal bites and scratches frequently become infected. One of the newer quinolones, such as levofloxacin (Levaquin), which many travelers carry in case of diarrhea, would be an appropriate choice.

Snakes and leeches are a hazard in some areas of South America. In the event of a bite from a venomous snake, place the victim at rest, keep the bitten area immobilized and move the victim immediately to the nearest medical facility. Avoid tourniquets, which are no longer recommended.

Mosquito Bites

To prevent mosquito bites, wear long sleeves, long pants, hats and shoes (rather than sandals). Bring along a good insect repellent, preferably one containing DEET, which should be applied to exposed skin and clothing, but not to eyes, mouth, cuts, wounds or irritated skin. Products containing lower concentrations of DEET are as effective, but for shorter periods of time. In general, adults and children over 12 years should use preparations containing 25% to 35% DEET, which usually lasts about six hours. Children between two and 12 years should use preparations containing no more than 10% DEET, applied sparingly, which will usually last about three hours. Neurologic toxicity has been reported from DEET, especially in children, but appears to be extremely uncommon and generally related to overuse. DEET-containing compounds should not be used on children under the age of two.

Insect repellents containing certain botanical products, including oil of eucalyptus and soybean oil, are effective but last only 1½ to two hours. DEET-containing repellents are preferable for areas where there is a high risk of malaria or yellow fever. Products based on citronella are not effective.

For additional protection, you can apply permethrin to clothing, shoes, tents and bed nets. Permethrin treatments are safe and remain effective for at least two weeks, even when items are laundered. Permethrin should not be applied directly to skin.

Don't sleep with the window open unless there is a screen. If sleeping outdoors or in accommodations that allow entry of mosquitoes, use a bed net, preferably treated with permethrin, with edges tucked in under the mattress. The mesh size should be less than 1.5mm. If the sleeping area is not otherwise protected, use a mosquito coil, which will fill the room with insecticide through the night. Repellent-impregnated wristbands are not effective.

Tick Bites

To protect yourself from tick bites, follow the same precautions as for mosquitoes, except that boots are preferable to shoes, with pants tucked in. Be sure to perform a thorough tick check at the end of each day. You'll generally need the assistance of a friend or mirror for a full examination. Ticks should be removed with tweezers, grasping them firmly by the head. Insect repellents based on botanical products, described earlier, have not been adequately studied for insects other than mosquitoes and cannot be recommended to prevent tick bites.

Water

Tap water is generally safe to drink in Argentine cities and towns. If you wish to purify water, vigorous boiling for one minute is the most effective means. At altitudes greater than 2000m, boil for three minutes.

Another option is to disinfect water with iodine. Add 2% tincture of iodine to 1L of water (five drops to clear water, 10 drops to cloudy water) and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cold, longer times may be required. Or buy iodine pills such as Globaline and Potable-Aqua, which are available at most pharmacies. Instructions should be carefully followed. The taste of iodinated water may be improved by adding vitamin C (ascorbic acid). Iodinated water should not be consumed for more than a few weeks. Pregnant women, those with a history of thyroid disease and those allergic to iodine should not drink iodinated water.

Of water filters, those with smaller pores (reverse osmosis filters) provide the broadest protection, but they are relatively large and are readily plugged by debris. Those with somewhat larger pores (microstrainer filters) are ineffective against viruses, although they remove other organisms. Manufacturers' instructions must be carefully followed.

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN

When traveling with young children, be particularly careful about what you allow them to eat and drink, because diarrhea can be especially dangerous for them and because the vaccines for hepatitis A and typhoid fever are not approved for use in children under two years.

In general, children under nine months should not be brought to northeastern forest areas near the border with Brazil and Paraguay, where yellow fever occurs, since the vaccine is not safe in this age group.

Chloroquine, which is the main drug used to prevent malaria, may be given to children, but insect repellents must be applied in lower concentrations.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

You can find an English-speaking obstetrician in Argentina by asking at your embassy. However, medical facilities will probably not be comparable to those in your home country.

Language

CONTENTS

Argentine Spanish	629
Phrasebooks & Dictionaries	629
Pronunciation	630
Gender & Plurals	630
Accommodations	631
Conversation & Essentials	631
Directions	632
Eating Out	632
Emergencies	633
Health	633
Language Difficulties	633
Numbers	633
Shopping & Services	634
Time & Dates	634
Transportation	635
Travel with Children	636

Spanish (known as *castellano* in Argentina and the rest of South America) is the official language and it is spoken throughout the country.

A number of immigrant communities have retained their languages as a badge of identity. In central Patagonia, for instance, there are pockets of Welsh speakers, but despite having undergone a bit of a revival in Argentina, the language is in danger of disappearing. Welsh cultural traditions remain strong in these regions, however, even reaching into the tourist industry.

English is studied, spoken and understood by many Argentines (especially in the capital). Italian is the language of the largest immigrant group and also understood by some, as is French. German speakers are numerous enough to support a weekly *porteño* newspaper, *Argentinisches Tageblatt*.

Argentina has over a dozen indigenous tongues, though some are spoken by very few individuals. In the Andean northwest, Quechua speakers are numerous, and most of these are also Spanish speakers. In the southern Andes, there are at least 40,000 Mapuche speakers. In northeastern Argentina, there are about 15,000 speakers of both Guaraní and Toba.

ARGENTINE SPANISH

In addition to their flamboyance, an Argentine's Italian-accented Spanish pronunciation and other language quirks readily identify them throughout Latin America and abroad. The most prominent peculiarity is the usage of the pronoun *vos* in place of *tú* for the informal 'you,' (see the boxed text, p630). Note that in Latin American Spanish, the plural of *tú* or *vos* is *ustedes,* not *vosotros* as in Spain. See also the next page for notes on the pronunciation of the letters *ll* and *y* in Argentine Spanish.

There are many vocabulary differences between European and Latin American Spanish, and among Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas. The speech of Buenos Aires, in particular, abounds with phrases from the colorful slang known as *lunfardo*. Although you shouldn't use *lunfardo* words unless you are confident that you know their every implication (especially in formal situations), you should be aware of some of the more common everyday usages (see the boxed text, p632).

Every visitor should make an effort to at least try to speak some Spanish; the basic elements are easily acquired. If possible, take a brief course before departure. Even if you can't speak very well, Argentines are gracious folk and will encourage your use of Spanish, so there is no need to feel self-conscious about vocabulary or pronunciation. There are many words similar to English, so if you're stuck, try Hispanicizing an English word – it's unlikely you'll make a truly embarrassing error. Do not, however, admit to being *embarazada* unless you are in fact pregnant. See the boxed text, p634, for other usages to avoid.

PHRASEBOOKS & DICTIONARIES

Lonely Planet's *Latin American Spanish* phrasebook is not only amusing but can also get you by in many situations. Another useful language resource is the *University of Chicago Spanish–English, English–Spanish Dictionary*. For a food and drink glossary, see p68.

EL VOSEO

Spanish in the Río de la Plata region differs from that of Spain and the rest of the Americas, most notably in the informal form of the word 'you.' Instead of *tuteo* (the use of *tú*), Argentines commonly speak with *voseo* (the use of *vos*), a relic from 16th-century Spanish requiring slightly different grammar. All verbs change in spelling, stress and pronunciation. Examples of verbs ending in *-ar*, *-er* and *-ir* are given below – the pronoun *tú* is included to illustrate the contrast. Imperative forms (commands) also differ, but negative imperatives are identical in both *tuteo* and *voseo*.

The Spanish phrases included in this book use the *vos* form. An Argentine inviting a foreigner to address him or her informally will say *Me podés tutear* (literally 'You can address me with *tú*'), even though they'll use the *vos* forms in subsequent conversation.

Verb	Tuteo	Voseo
hablar (speak): **You speak./Speak!**	*Tú hablas./¡Habla!*	*Vos hablás./¡Hablá!*
soñar (dream): **You dream./Dream!**	*Tú sueñas./¡Sueña!*	*Vos soñás./¡Soñá!*
comer (eat): **You eat./Eat!**	*Tú comes./¡Come!*	*Vos comés./¡Comé!*
poner (put): **You put./Put!**	*Tú pones./¡Pon!*	*Vos ponés./¡Poné!*
admitir (admit): **You admit./Admit!**	*Tú admites./¡Admite!*	*Vos admitís./¡Admití!*
venir (come): **You come./Come!**	*Tú vienes./¡Ven!*	*Vos venís./¡Vení!*

PRONUNCIATION

Latin American Spanish is easy, as most of the sounds are also found in English. If you follow our pronunciation guides (included alongside the Spanish phrases), you'll have no problems being understood.

Vowels

There are four sounds (**ai**, **ay**, **ow**, **oy**) that roughly correspond to diphthongs (vowel sound combinations) in English.

a as the 'a' in 'father'
ai as in 'aisle'
ay as in 'say'
e as the 'e' in 'met'
ee as the 'ee' in 'meet'
o as the 'o' in 'more'
oo as the 'oo' in 'zoo'
ow as in 'how'
oy as in 'boy'

Consonants

Pronunciation of Spanish consonants is similar to their English counterparts. The exceptions are given in the following list.

kh as the throaty 'ch' in the Scottish *loch*
ny as the 'ny' in 'canyon'
r as in 'run' but stronger and rolled, especially at the beginning of a word and in all words with *rr*
s not lisped

The letter 'h' is always silent (ie never pronounced) in Spanish.

Note also that the Spanish **b** and **v** sounds are very similar – they are both pronounced as a very soft 'v' in English (somewhere between 'b' and 'v').

There are some variations in spoken Spanish across Latin America, the most notable being the pronunciation of the letter *ll*. In much of Latin America it is pronounced as 'y' (eg as in 'yes'), while in some parts of the continent it sounds like the 'lli' in 'million.' In Argentina and Uruguay, however, the letters *ll* and *y* are both pronounced as 'zh' (like the 's' in 'measure'), and in and around Buenos Aires as the 'sh' in 'shut.' We've used the former in our pronunciation guides as it's more widespread.

Word Stress

In general, Spanish words ending in vowels or the consonants *-n* or *-s* are stressed on the second-last syllable, while those with other endings have stress on the last syllable. Written accents denote stress, and override the rules above, eg *sótano* (basement), *América, porción* (portion).

In our pronunciation guides the stressed syllable is indicated with italics, so you needn't worry about these rules.

GENDER & PLURALS

In Spanish, nouns are either masculine or feminine, and there are rules to help determine gender. Feminine nouns generally

end with *-a*, *-ad*, *-z* or *-ión*. Other endings, particularly *-o*, typically signify a masculine noun. Endings for adjectives change to agree with the gender of the noun they modify (masculine/feminine *-o*/*-a*). Where both masculine and feminine forms are included in this chapter, they are separated by a slash, with the masculine form given first, eg *perdido/a*.

If a noun or adjective ends in a vowel, the plural is formed by adding *-s*. If it ends in a consonant, the plural is formed by adding *-es* to the end of the word.

ACCOMMODATIONS

I'm looking for a …	*Estoy buscando …*	e·*stoy* boos·*kan*·do …
Where's a …?	*¿Dónde hay …?*	*don*·de ai …
boarding house	*una residencial*	*oo*·na re·si·den·*syal*
hotel	*un hotel*	oon o·*tel*
youth hostel	*un albergue de juventud*	oon al·*ber*·ge de khoo·ven·*tood*
I'd like a … room.	*Quisiera una habitación …*	kee·*sye*·ra *oo*·na *a*·bee·ta·*syon …*
double	*doble*	*do*·ble
single	*individual*	een·dee·vee·*dwal*
twin	*con dos camas*	kon dos *ka*·mas
How much is it per …?	*¿Cuánto cuesta por …?*	*kwan*·to *kwes*·ta por …
night	*noche*	*no*·che
person	*persona*	per·*so*·na
week	*semana*	se·*ma*·na

Does it include breakfast?
¿Incluye el desayuno? een·*kloo*·zhe el de·sa·*zhoo*·no

Can I see the room?
¿Puedo ver la habitación? *pwe*·do ver la a·bee·ta·*syon*

I don't like it.
No me gusta. no me *goos*·ta

It's fine. I'll take it.
Está bien. La alquilo. es·*ta* byen la al·*kee*·lo

I'm leaving now.
Me voy ahora. me voy a·*o*·ra

cheaper	*más económico*	mas e·ko·*no*·mee·ko
discount	*descuento*	des·*kwen*·to
full board	*pensión completa*	pen·*syon* kom·*ple*·ta
private/shared bathroom	*baño privado/compartido*	*ba*·nyo pree·*va*·do/kom·par·*tee*·do
too expensive	*demasiado caro*	de·ma·*sya*·do *ka*·ro

MAKING A RESERVATION

(for phone or written requests)

From …	*De …*
To …	*A …*
Date	*Fecha*
I'd like to book …	*Quisiera reservar …*
in the name of …	*en nombre de …*
for the nights of …	*para las noches del …*
credit card	*tarjeta de crédito*
expiry date	*fecha de vencimiento*
number	*número*
Please confirm …	*¿Puede confirmar …?*
availability	*la disponibilidad*
price	*el precio*

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Hello. (inf)	*Hola.*	*o*·la
Good morning.	*Buenos días.*	*bwe*·nos *dee*·as
Good afternoon.	*Buenas tardes.*	*bwe*·nas *tar*·des
Good evening/night.	*Buenas noches.*	*bwe*·nas *no*·ches
Bye. (inf)	*Chau.*	chow
Goodbye.	*Adiós.*	a·*dyos*
See you later.	*Hasta luego.*	*as*·ta *lwe*·go
Yes./No.	*Sí./No.*	see/no
Please.	*Por favor.*	por fa·*vor*
Thank you.	*Gracias.*	*gra*·syas
Many thanks.	*Muchas gracias.*	*moo*·chas *gra*·syas
You're welcome.	*De nada.*	de *na*·da
Pardon.	*Perdón.*	per·*don*
Excuse me. (asking permission)	*Permiso.*	per·*mee*·so
Forgive me. (apologizing)	*Disculpe.*	dees·*kool*·pe

How are you?
¿Cómo está/estás? *co*·mo es·*ta*/es·*tas* (pol/inf)

What's your name?
¿Cómo se llama? *ko*·mo se *zha*·ma (pol)
¿Cómo te llamás? *ko*·mo te zha·*mas* (inf)

My name is …
Me llamo … me *zha*·mo …

It's a pleasure to meet you.
Mucho gusto. *moo*·cho *goos*·to

The pleasure is mine.
El gusto es mío. el *goos*·to es *mee*·o

Where are you from?
¿De dónde es/sos? de *don*·de es/sos (pol/inf)

I'm from …
Soy de … soy de …

Can I take a photo?
¿Puedo tomar una foto? *pwe*·do to·*mar oo*·na *fo*·to

LUNFARDO

Below are some of the spicier *lunfardo* (slang) terms you may hear on your travels in Argentina.

boliche – disco or nightclub
boludo – jerk, asshole, idiot; often used in a friendly fashion, but a deep insult to a stranger
bondi – bus
buena onda – good vibes
carajo – asshole, prick; bloody hell
chabón/chabona – kid, guy/girl (term of endearment)
che – hey
diez puntos – OK, cool, fine (literally '10 points')
fiaca – laziness
guita – money
macanudo – great, fabulous
mango – one peso
masa – a great, cool thing
mina – woman
morfar – eat
pendejo – idiot
piba/pibe – cool young guy/girl
piola – cool, clever
pucho – cigarette
re – very, as in *re interestante* (very interesting)

¡Ponete las pilas! – Get on with it! (literally 'Put in the batteries!')
Me mataste. – I don't know; I have no idea. (literally 'You've killed me')
Le faltan un par de jugadores. – He's not playing with a full deck. (literally 'He's a couple of players short (of a team)')
che boludo – The most *porteño* phrase on earth. Ask a friendly local youth to explain.

DIRECTIONS

How do I get to …?
¿Cómo puedo llegar a …? ko·mo *pwe*·do zhe·*gar* a …
Is it far?
¿Está lejos? es·*ta le*·khos
What's the address?
¿Cuál es la dirección? kwal es la dee·rek·*syon*
Can you show me (on the map)?
¿Me lo podría indicar (en el mapa)? me lo po·*dree*·a een·dee·*kar* (en el *ma*·pa)
Go straight ahead.
Siga derecho. *see*·ga de·*re*·cho
Turn left/right.
Voltée a la izquierda/ derecha. vol·*te*·e a la ees·*kyer*·da/ de·*re*·cha

north	*norte*	*nor*·te
south	*sur*	soor
east	*este*	*es*·te
west	*oeste*	o·*es*·te
avenue	*avenida*	a·ve·*nee*·da
block	*cuadra*	*kwa*·dra
here	*aquí*	a·*kee*
there	*allí*	a·*zhee*
street	*calle*	*ka*·zhe

EATING OUT

I'd like to make a reservation.
Quisiera hacer una reserva. kee·*sye*·ra a·*ser* *oo*·na re·*ser*·va
Do you accept credit cards?
¿Aceptan tarjetas de crédito? a·*sep*·tan tar·*khe*·tas de *kre*·dee·to
When do you serve meals?
¿A qué hora sirven comidas? a ke *o*·ra *seer*·ven ko·*mee*·das
A table for …, please.
Una mesa para …, por favor. *oo*·na *me*·sa *pa*·ra … por fa·*vor*
Can I see the menu, please?
¿Puedo ver el menú, por favor? *pwe*·do ver el me·*noo* por fa·*vor*
What do you recommend?
¿Qué me aconseja? ke me a·kon·*se*·kha
What's today's special?
¿Cuál es el plato del día? kwal es el *pla*·to del *dee*·a
What's the soup of the day?
¿Cuál es la sopa del día? kwal es la *so*·pa del *dee*·a
I'll try what he/she is having.
Probaré lo que él/ella está comiendo. pro·ba·*re* lo ke el/*e*·zha es·*ta* ko·*myen*·do
I'm a vegetarian.
Soy vegetariano/a. soy ve·khe·ta·*rya*·no/a
We'd like to share (the salad).
Quisiéramos compartir (la ensalada). kee·*sye*·ra·mos kom·par·*teer* (la en·sa·*la*·da)
What's in this dish?
¿Qué ingredientes tiene este plato? ke een·gre·*dyen*·tes *tye*·ne *es*·te *pla*·to
Can I have a (beer), please?
Una (cerveza), por favor. *oo*·na (ser·*ve*·sa) por fa·*vor*
Is service/cover charge included in the bill?
¿El precio en el menú incluye el servicio de cubierto? el *pre*·syo en el me·*noo* een·*kloo*·zhe el ser·*vee*·syo de koo·*byer*·to
That was delicious.
Estaba buenísimo. es·*ta*·ba bwe·*nee*·see·mo
The bill, please.
La cuenta, por favor. la *kwen*·ta por fa·*vor*

EMERGENCIES

Help! *¡Ayuda!* a·*zhoo*·da
Go away! *¡Déjeme!* *de*·khe·me

Call …!	*¡Llame a …!*	*zha*·me a …
an ambulance	*una ambulancia*	*oo*·na am·boo·*lan*·sya
a doctor	*un médico*	oon *me*·dee·ko
the police	*la policía*	la po·lee·*see*·a

It's an emergency.
Es una emergencia. es *oo*·na e·mer·*khen*·sya
Can you help me, please?
¿Me puede ayudar, por favor? me *pwe*·de a·zhoo·*dar* por fa·*vor*
I'm lost.
Estoy perdido/a. es·*toy* per·*dee*·do/a
Where are the toilets?
¿Dónde están los baños? *don*·de es·*tan* los *ba*·nyos

I'd like a …	*Quiero …*	*kye*·ro …
knife	*un cuchillo*	oon koo·*chee*·zho
fork	*un tenedor*	oon te·ne·*dor*
spoon	*una cuchara*	*oo*·na koo·*cha*·ra

HEALTH

I'm sick.
Estoy enfermo/a. es·*toy* en·*fer*·mo/a
I need a doctor.
Necesito un médico. ne·se·*see*·to oon *me*·dee·ko
Where's the hospital?
¿Dónde está el hospital? *don*·de es·*ta* el os·pee·*tal*
I'm pregnant.
Estoy embarazada. es·*toy* em·ba·ra·*sa*·da
I've been vaccinated.
Estoy vacunado/a. es·*toy* va·koo·*na*·do/a

I'm allergic to …	*Soy alérgico/a a …*	soy a·*ler*·khee·ko/a a …
antibiotics	*los antibióticos*	los an·tee·*byo*·tee·kos
nuts	*las nueces*	las *nwe*·ses
penicillin	*la penicilina*	la pe·nee·see·*lee*·na

I'm …	*Soy …*	soy …
asthmatic	*asmático/a*	as·*ma*·tee·ko/a
diabetic	*diabético/a*	dya·*be*·tee·ko/a
epileptic	*epiléptico/a*	e·pee·*lep*·tee·ko/a

I have (a) …	*Tengo …*	*ten*·go …
cough	*tos*	tos
diarrhea	*diarrea*	dya·*re*·a
headache	*dolor de cabeza*	do·*lor* de ka·*be*·sa
nausea	*náusea*	*now*·se·a

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

Do you speak English?
¿Habla/Hablas inglés? *a*·bla/*a*·blas een·*gles* (pol/inf)
Does anyone here speak English?
¿Hay alguien que hable inglés? ai *al*·gyen ke *a*·ble een·*gles*
I (don't) understand.
(No) Entiendo. (no) en·*tyen*·do
How do you say …?
¿Cómo se dice …? *ko*·mo se *dee*·se …
What does … mean?
¿Qué quiere decir …? ke *kye*·re de·*seer* …

Could you please …?	*¿Puede …, por favor?*	*pwe*·de … por fa·*vor*
repeat that	*repetirlo*	re·pe·*teer*·lo
speak more slowly	*hablar más despacio*	a·*blar* mas des·*pa*·syo
write it down	*escribirlo*	es·kree·*beer*·lo

NUMBERS

1	*uno*	*oo*·no
2	*dos*	dos
3	*tres*	tres
4	*cuatro*	*kwa*·tro
5	*cinco*	*seen*·ko
6	*seis*	seys
7	*siete*	*sye*·te
8	*ocho*	*o*·cho
9	*nueve*	*nwe*·ve
10	*diez*	dyes
11	*once*	*on*·se
12	*doce*	*do*·se
13	*trece*	*tre*·se
14	*catorce*	ka·*tor*·se
15	*quince*	*keen*·se
16	*dieciséis*	dye·see·*seys*
17	*diecisiete*	dye·see·*sye*·te
18	*dieciocho*	dye·see·*o*·cho
19	*diecinueve*	dye·see·*nwe*·ve
20	*veinte*	*vayn*·te
21	*veintiuno*	vayn·tee·*oo*·no
30	*treinta*	*trayn*·ta
31	*treinta y uno*	*trayn*·ta ee *oo*·no
40	*cuarenta*	kwa·*ren*·ta
50	*cincuenta*	seen·*kwen*·ta
60	*sesenta*	se·*sen*·ta
70	*setenta*	se·*ten*·ta
80	*ochenta*	o·*chen*·ta
90	*noventa*	no·*ven*·ta
100	*cien*	syen
101	*ciento uno*	*syen*·to *oo*·no
200	*doscientos*	do·*syen*·tos
1000	*mil*	meel
10,000	*diez mil*	dyes meel

FALSE FRIENDS

'False friends' are words that appear to be very similar but have different meanings in different languages. In some cases, these differences can lead to serious misunderstandings. The following is a list of some of these words in English with their Spanish cousins and their meaning in Spanish. Note that this list deals primarily with the Río de la Plata region, and usage may differ elsewhere in South America. Also, be careful with some words from Spain, like *coger*, which in Mexico and South America doesn't mean 'to get or catch' but it's a slang (and rude) term for 'to have sex.'

English	Spanish	Meaning in Spanish
actual	*actual*	current (at present)
carpet	*carpeta*	loose-leaf notebook
embarrassed	*embarazada*	pregnant
fabric	*fábrica*	factory
to introduce	*introducir*	to introduce (eg an innovation)
notorious	*notorio*	well known, evident
to present	*presentar*	to introduce (a person)
precise	*preciso*	necessary
preservative	*preservativo*	condom
sensible	*sensible*	sensitive
violation	*violación*	rape

SHOPPING & SERVICES

I'd like to buy …
Quisiera comprar … kee·*sye*·ra kom·*prar* …

I'm just looking.
Sólo estoy mirando. *so*·lo es·*toy* mee·*ran*·do

May I look at it?
¿Puedo mirarlo? *pwe*·do mee·*rar*·lo

How much is it?
¿Cuánto cuesta? *kwan*·to *kwes*·ta

That's too expensive for me.
Es demasiado caro para mí. es de·ma·*sya*·do *ka*·ro *pa*·ra mee

Could you lower the price?
¿Podría bajar un poco el precio? po·*dree*·a ba·*khar* oon *po*·ko el *pre*·syo

I don't like it.
No me gusta. no me *goos*·ta

I'll take it.
Lo llevo. lo *zhe*·vo

big/small	*grande/pequeño*	*gran*·de/pe·*ke*·nyo
more/less	*más/menos*	mas/*me*·nos
Do you accept …?	*¿Aceptan …?*	a·*sep*·tan …
American dollars	*dólares americanos*	*do*·la·res a·me·ree·*ka*·nos
credit cards	*tarjetas de crédito*	tar·*khe*·tas de *kre*·dee·to
traveler's checks	*cheques de viajero*	che·kes de vya·*khe*·ro

I'm looking for (the) …	*Estoy buscando …*	es·*toy* boos·*kan*·do …
ATM	*el cajero automático*	el ka·*khe*·ro ow·to·*ma*·tee·ko
bank	*el banco*	el *ban*·ko
bookstore	*la librería*	la lee·bre·*ree*·a
chemist	*la farmacia*	la far·*ma*·sya
embassy	*la embajada*	la em·ba·*kha*·da
exchange office	*la casa de cambio*	la *ka*·sa de *kam*·byo
general store	*la tienda*	la *tyen*·da
laundry	*la lavandería*	la la·van·de·*ree*·a
post office	*los correos*	los ko·*re*·os
(super)market	*el (super-) mercado*	el (*soo*·per·) mer·*ka*·do
tourist office	*la oficina de turismo*	la o·fee·*see*·na de too·*rees*·mo

What time does it open/close?
¿A qué hora abre/cierra? a ke *o*·ra *a*·bre/*sye*·ra

I want to change some money/traveler's checks.
Quiero cambiar dinero/ cheques de viajero. *kye*·ro kam·*byar* dee·*ne*·ro/ *che*·kes de vya·*khe*·ro

What is the exchange rate?
¿Cuál es el tipo de cambio? kwal es el *tee*·po de *kam*·byo

I want to call …
Quiero llamar a … *kye*·ro zha·*mar* a …

Where's the local internet cafe?
¿Dónde hay un cibercafé por acá? *don*·de ai oon sai·ber·ka·*fe* por a·*ka*

I'd like to get internet access.
Quisiera usar internet. kee·*sye*·ra oo·*sar een*·ter·net

airmail	*correo aéreo*	ko·*re*·o a·*e*·re·o
black market	*mercado negro*	mer·*ka*·do *ne*·gro
letter	*carta*	*kar*·ta
registered mail	*certificado*	ser·tee·fee·*ka*·do
stamps	*estampillas*	es·tam·*pee*·zhas

TIME & DATES

What time is it?	*¿Qué hora es?*	ke *o*·ra es
It's one o'clock.	*Es la una.*	es la *oo*·na
It's (six) o'clock.	*Son las (seis).*	son las (seys)
half past (two)	*(dos) y media*	(dos) ee *me*·dya

SIGNS

Abierto	Open
Cerrado	Closed
Comisaría	Police Station
Entrada	Entrance
Información	Information
Prohibido	Prohibited
Salida	Exit
Baños	Toilets
Hombres/Caballeros	Men
Mujeres/Damas	Women

yesterday	*ayer*	a·*zher*
today	*hoy*	oy
now	*ahora*	a·*o*·ra
noon	*mediodía*	me·dyo·*dee*·a
tonight	*esta noche*	*es*·ta *no*·che
midnight	*medianoche*	me·dya·*no*·che
tomorrow	*mañana*	ma·*nya*·na

Monday	*lunes*	*loo*·nes
Tuesday	*martes*	*mar*·tes
Wednesday	*miércoles*	*myer*·ko·les
Thursday	*jueves*	*khwe*·ves
Friday	*viernes*	*vyer*·nes
Saturday	*sábado*	*sa*·ba·do
Sunday	*domingo*	do·*meen*·go

January	*enero*	e·*ne*·ro
February	*febrero*	fe·*bre*·ro
March	*marzo*	*mar*·so
April	*abril*	a·*breel*
May	*mayo*	*ma*·zho
June	*junio*	*khoo*·nyo
July	*julio*	*khoo*·lyo
August	*agosto*	a·*gos*·to
September	*septiembre*	sep·*tyem*·bre
October	*octubre*	ok·*too*·bre
November	*noviembre*	no·*vyem*·bre
December	*diciembre*	dee·*syem*·bre

TRANSPORTATION

Public Transportation

At what time does the … leave/arrive?	*¿A qué hora sale/llega el …?*	a ke *o*·ra *sa*·le/*zhe*·ga el …
bus	*autobus*	ow·to·*boos*
plane	*avión*	a·*vyon*
ship	*barco*	*bar*·ko
train	*tren*	tren

I'd like a ticket to …
Quisiera un boleto a … kee·*sye*·ra oon bo·*le*·to a …

What's the fare to …?
¿Cuánto cuesta hasta …? *kwan*·to *kwes*·ta *a*·sta …

1st class	*primera clase*	pree·*me*·ra *kla*·se
2nd class	*segunda clase*	se·*goon*·da *kla*·se
one-way	*ida*	*ee*·da
round-trip	*ida y vuelta*	*ee*·da ee *vwel*·ta
student's (fare)	*de estudiante*	de es·too·*dyan*·te
taxi	*taxi*	*tak*·see

airport	*el aeropuerto*	el a·e·ro·*pwer*·to
bus station	*la estación de autobuses*	la es·ta·*syon* de ow·to·*boo*·ses
bus stop	*la parada de autobuses*	la pa·*ra*·da de ow·to·*boo*·ses
luggage check room	*guardería de equipaje*	gwar·de·*ree*·a de e·kee·*pa*·khe
ticket office	*la boletería*	la bo·le·te·*ree*·a
train station	*la estación de ferrocarril*	la es·ta·*syon* de fe·ro·ka·*reel*

Private Transportation

I'd like to hire a …	*Quisiera alquilar …*	kee·*sye*·ra al·kee·*lar* …
4WD	*un todo terreno*	oon *to*·do te·*re*·no
bicycle	*una bicicleta*	*oo*·na bee·see·*kle*·ta
car	*un auto*	oon *ow*·to
motorbike	*una moto*	*oo*·na *mo*·to

hitchhike	*hacer dedo*	a·*ser de*·do
pickup (truck)	*camioneta*	ka·myo·*ne*·ta
truck	*camión*	ka·*myon*

Is this the road to …?
¿Se va a … por esta carretera? se va a … por *es*·ta ka·re·*te*·ra

Where's a gas/petrol station?
¿Dónde hay una gasolinera? *don*·de ai *oo*·na ga·so·lee·*ne*·ra

Please fill it up.
Lleno, por favor. *zhe*·no por fa·*vor*

I'd like (20) liters.
Quiero (veinte) litros. *kye*·ro (*vayn*·te) *lee*·tros

diesel	*diesel*	*dee*·sel
gas/petrol	*gasolina*	ga·so·*lee*·na
leaded (regular)	*con plomo*	kon *plo*·mo
unleaded	*sin plomo*	seen *plo*·mo

(How long) Can I park here?
¿(Por cuánto tiempo) Puedo estacionar aquí? (por *kwan*·to *tyem*·po) *pwe*·do es·ta·syo·*nar* a·*kee*

Where do I pay?
¿Dónde se paga? *don*·de se *pa*·ga

ROAD SIGNS

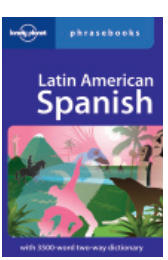
Acceso	Entrance
Ceda el Paso	Give Way
Despacio	Slow
Dirección Única	One Way
Estacionamiento	Parking
Mantenga Su Derecha	Keep to the Right
No Adelantar	No Passing
Peaje	Toll
Peligro	Danger
Prohibido el Paso	No Entry
Prohibido Estacionar	No Parking
Salida de Autopista	Freeway Exit

I need a mechanic.
Necesito un mecánico. ne·se·*see*·to oon me·*ka*·nee·ko
The car has broken down (in …).
El carro se ha averiado (en …). el *ka*·ro se a a·ve·*rya*·do (en …)
The motorbike won't start.
No arranca la moto. no a·*ran*·ka la *mo*·to
I have a flat tyre.
Tengo un pinchazo. *ten*·go oon peen·*cha*·so
I've run out of gas/petrol.
Me quedé sin gasolina. me ke·*de* seen ga·so·*lee*·na
I've had an accident.
Tuve un accidente. *too*·ve oon ak·see·*den*·te

TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN

Do you mind if I breast-feed here?
¿Le molesta que dé de pecho aquí? le mo·*les*·ta ke de de *pe*·cho a·*kee*
Are children allowed?
¿Se admiten niños? se ad·*mee*·ten *nee*·nyos

I need (a) …	*Necesito …*	ne·se·*see*·to …
Do you have (a) …?	*¿Hay …?*	ai …
babysitter (who speaks English)	*una niñera (que habla inglés)*	*oo*·na nee·*nye*·ra (ke *a*·bla een·*gles*)
car seat for babies	*un asiento de seguridad para bebés*	oon a·*syen*·to de se·goo·ree·*dad pa*·ra be·*bes*
child-minding service	*un servicio de cuidado de niños*	oon ser·*vee*·syo de kwee·*da*·do de *nee*·nyos
(disposable) diapers/ nappies	*pañales (de usar y tirar)*	pa·*nya*·les (de oo·*sar* ee tee·*rar*)
highchair	*una trona*	*oo*·na *tro*·na
milk formula	*leche en polvo*	*le*·che en *pol*·vo
potty	*una pelela*	*oo*·na pe·*le*·la
stroller	*un cochecito*	oon ko·che·*see*·to



Also available from Lonely Planet:
Latin American Spanish phrasebook

Glossary

For an explanation of food-related terms, see p61; for some accommodation terms, p596, and for language in general, p629.

abuelos – grandparents
ACA – Automóvil Club Argentino, which provides maps, road service, insurance and other services, and operates hotels and campgrounds throughout the country
acequia – irrigation canal
aerosilla – chairlift
alcalde – mayor
alerce – large coniferous tree, resembling a California redwood, from which Argentina's Parque Nacional Los Alerces takes its name
apeadero – whistle-stop
arrayán – tree of the myrtle family, from which Argentina's Parque Nacional Los Arrayanes takes its name
arroyo – creek, stream
arte rupestre – cave paintings
asado – the famous Argentine barbecue
autopista – freeway or motorway

baliza – emergency reflector
balneario – any swimming or bathing area, including beach resorts, river beaches and swimming holes
balsa – ferry
bandoneón – an accordion-like instrument used in tango music
barra brava – fervent soccer fan; the Argentine equivalent of Britain's 'football hooligan'
bencina – white gas, used for camp stoves; also known as *nafta blanca*
bicho – any small creature, from insect to mammal; also used to refer to an ugly person
boleadoras – weighted, leather-covered balls attached to a length of thin rope, historically used as a hunting weapon by gauchos and some of Argentina's indigenous peoples; thrown at a guanaco or rhea's legs, they entangle the animal and bring it down
boliche – nightclub or disco
bombachas – a gaucho's baggy pants; can also mean women's underwear
bombilla – metal straw with filter for drinking *mate*
buena onda – good vibes

cabildo – colonial town council; also, the building that housed the council
cacerolazo – a form of street protest; it first occurred in December 2001 when people took to their balconies in Buenos Aires banging pots and pans *(cacerolas)* to show their discontent; the banging moved to the streets, then to cities throughout Argentina, and culminated in the resignation of President de la Rua
cajero automático – ATM
caldén – a tree characteristic of the dry pampas
camarote – 1st-class sleeper
cambio – money-exchange office; also *casa de cambio*
campo – the countryside; alternately, a field or paddock
característica – telephone area code
carnavalito – traditional folk dance
carpincho – capybara, a large (but cute) aquatic rodent that inhabits the Paraná and other subtropical rivers
carrovelismo – land sailing
cartelera – an office selling discount tickets
casa de cambio – money-exchange office, often shortened to *cambio*
casa de familia – family accommodations
casa de gobierno – literally 'government house,' a building now often converted to a museum, offices etc
castellano – the term used in much of South America for the Spanish language spoken throughout Latin America; literally refers to Castilian Spanish
catarata – waterfall
caudillo – in 19th-century Argentine politics, a provincial strongman whose power rested more on personal loyalty than political ideals or party affiliation
centro cívico – civic center
cerro – hill, mountain
certificado – certified mail
chacarera – traditional folk dance
chacra – small, independent farm
chamamé – folk music of Corrientes
chusquea – solid bamboo of the Valdivian rainforest in Patagonia
coche cama – sleeper class
coima – a bribe; one who solicits a bribe is a *coimero*
colectivo – local bus
combi – long-distance bus
comedor – basic cafeteria
común – common class
Conaf – Corporación Nacional Forestal, Chilean state agency in charge of forestry and conservation, including management of national parks like Torres del Paine
confitería – cafe serving light meals
conjunto – a musical band
Conquista del Desierto – Conquest of the Desert, a euphemism for General Julio Argentino Roca's late-19th-century war of extermination against the Mapuche of northern Patagonia
contrabajo – double bass

correo – post office
corriente – current
cospel – token used in public telephones
costanera – seaside, riverside or lakeside road or walkway
criollo – in colonial period, an American-born Spaniard, but now used for any Latin American of European descent; the term also describes the feral cattle and horses of the pampas
cruce – crossroads
cuatrerismo – cattle rustling

día de campo – 'day in the country,' spent at an *estancia;* typically includes an *asado,* horseback riding and use of the property's facilities
desaparecidos (los) – the disappeared; the victims (estimated at up to 30,000) of Argentina's *Guerra Sucia* who were never found
dique – a dam; the resultant reservoir is often used for recreational purposes; can also refer to a drydock
Dirty War – see *Guerra Sucia*
dorado – large river fish in the Paraná drainage, known among fishing enthusiasts as the 'Tiger of the Paraná' for its fighting spirit
duende – gnome

edificio – a building
ejecutivo – executive class
encomienda – colonial labor system, under which Indian communities were required to provide laborers for Spaniards *(encomenderos),* and the Spaniards were to provide religious and language instruction; in practice, the system benefited Spaniards far more than native peoples
epa – an exclamation meaning 'Hey! Wow! Look out!'
ERP – Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo, a revolutionary leftist group in the sugar-growing areas of Tucumán province in the 1970s that modeled itself after the Cuban revolution; it was wiped out by the Argentine army during the *Guerra Sucia*
esquina – street corner
estación de servicio – gas station
estancia – extensive ranch for cattle or sheep, with an owner or manager *(estanciero)* and dependent resident labor force; many are now open to tourists for recreational activities such as riding, tennis and swimming, either for weekend escapes or extended stays
este – east

facón – a knife used by gauchos that is traditionally worn in the small of the back behind the belt
folklore – Argentine folk music; also known as folklórico
fútbol – soccer

gasolero – motor vehicle that uses diesel fuel, which is much cheaper than ordinary gasoline in Argentina
guardaganado – cattle guard (on a road or highway)
guardia – watchman

Guerra Sucia – the Dirty War of the 1970s, of the Argentine military against left-wing revolutionaries and anyone suspected of sympathizing with them; also referred to as the 'military period'
guitarrón – an oversized guitar used for playing bass lines

horario – schedule

ichu – bunch grass of the Andean altiplano
ida – one-way
ida y vuelta – roundtrip
iglesia – church
interno – internal bus-route number; also a telephone extension number
IVA – *impuesto al valor agregado;* value-added tax, often added to restaurant or hotel bills in Argentina

jejenes – annoying biting insects
jineteada – rodeo

libro de reclamos – complaint book
locutorio – private long-distance telephone office; usually offers fax and internet services as well
lunfardo – street slang

manta – a shawl or bedspread
manzana – literally, 'apple'; also used to define one square block of a city
maragatos – inhabitants of Carmen de Patagones
mate – tea made from *yerba mate* leaves; Argentina is the world's largest producer and consumer of *mate* and preparing and drinking the beverage is an important social ritual; the word also refers to the *mate* gourd the tea is prepared in
mazorca – political police of 19th-century Argentine dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas
mercado artesanal – handicraft market
meseta – interior steppe of eastern Patagonia
mestizo – a person of mixed Indian and Spanish descent
milonga – in tango, refers to a song, a dance or the dance salon itself
minutas – snacks or short orders
mirador – scenic viewpoint, usually on a hill but often in a building
monte – scrub forest; the term is often applied to any densely vegetated area
Montoneros – left-wing faction of the Peronist party that became an underground urban guerrilla movement in 1970s
municipalidad – city hall

nafta – gasoline or petrol
neumático – spare tire
norte – north

oeste – west
Ovnis – UFOs

parada – a bus stop
paraje – pump
parrilla – mixed grill or steak house; also *parrillada*
paseo – an outing, such as a walk in the park or downtown
pato – duck; also a gaucho sport where players on horseback wrestle for a ball encased in a leather harness with handles
peatonal – pedestrian mall, usually in the downtown area of major Argentine cities
pehuén – araucaria, or 'monkey puzzle' tree of southern Patagonia
peña – club that hosts informal folk-music gatherings
percha – perch, also means coathanger
picada – in rural areas, a trail, especially through dense woods or mountains; in the context of food, hors d'oeuvres or snacks
pingüinera – penguin colony
piqueteros – picketers
piropo – a flirtatious remark
piso – floor
porteño/a – inhabitant of Buenos Aires, a 'resident of the port'
precios patagónicos – Patagonian prices
precordillera – foothills of the Andes
primera – 1st class on a train
Proceso – short for El Proceso de Reorganización Nacional, the military's euphemism for its brutal attempt to remake Argentina's political and economic culture between 1976 and 1983
propina – a tip, for example, in a restaurant or cinema
pucará – in the Andean northwest, a pre-Columbian fortification, generally on high ground commanding an unobstructed view in several directions
pulpería – a country store or tavern
puna – Andean highlands, usually above 3000m
puntano – a native or resident of Argentina's San Luis province

quebracho – literally, 'ax-breaker'; tree common to the Chaco that's a natural source of tannin for the leather industry
quebrada – a canyon
quincho – thatch-roof hut, now often used to refer to a building at the back of a house used for parties

rambla – boardwalk
rancho – a rural house, generally of adobe, with a thatched roof
recargo – additional charge, usually 10%, that many Argentine businesses add to credit-card transactions
reducción – an Indian settlement created by Spanish missionaries during the colonial period; the most famous are the Jesuit missions in the triple-border area of Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil
refugio – a usually rustic shelter in a national park or remote area
remise – radio taxi without a meter that generally offers fixed fares within a given zone; also *remís*
riacho – stream
ripio – gravel
rotisería – take-out shop
rotonda – traffic circle, roundabout
RN – Ruta Nacional; a national highway
RP – Ruta Provincial; a provincial highway
ruta – highway

s/n -*sin número,* indicating a street address without a number
sábalo – popular river fish in the Paraná drainage
salar – salt lake or salt pan, usually in the high Andes or Argentine Patagonia
samba – traditional folk dance
semi-cama – semisleeper class
sendero – a trail in the woods
servicentro – gas station
siesta – lengthy afternoon break for lunch and, sometimes, a nap
Subte – the Buenos Aires subway system
sur – south
surubí – popular river fish frequently served in restaurants

tahona – flour mill
tapir – large hoofed mammal of subtropical forests in northern Argentina and Paraguay; a distant relative of the horse
tarjeta magnética – magnetic bus card
tarjeta telefónica – telephone card
tarjeta verde – 'green card'; title document for Argentine vehicles that drivers must carry
teleférico – gondola cable-car
telera – textile workshop
tenedor libre – all you can eat
todo terreno – mountain bike
tola – high-altitude shrubs in the altiplano of northwestern Argentina
torrontés – an Argentine white grape and wine
trapiche – sugar mill
turista – 2nd class on a train, usually not very comfortable

vicuña – wild relative of domestic llama and alpaca, found in Argentina's Andean northwest only at high altitudes
vino tinto – red wine
vinoteca – wine bar

yacaré – South American caiman, found in humid, subtropical areas
YPF – Yacimientos Fiscales Petrolíferos, Argentina's former national oil company
yungas – in northwestern Argentina, transitional subtropical lowland forest

zapateo – folkloric tap dance
zona franca – duty-free zone
zonda – a hot, dry wind descending from the Andes

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